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ABSTRACT

This is the final report of a 2-year qualitative study of 3 elementary schools implementing the Success for All (SFA) program. Success for All is a research-based reform model that organizes resources to focus on prevention and early intervention to ensure that students succeed in reading throughout the elementary grades. Data were gathered in 61 interviews with school staff, 60 classroom observations, and relevant school documents. All three schools achieved full implementation of SFA, and all of the major components of the program were in place and mostly functioning as planned. Administrators influenced the adoption of SFA in all three schools. A number of positive outcomes were observed in the three schools. Student engagement in reading was high, and classroom instruction in reading was more effective than instruction in other academic subjects. Teachers had acquired new and valuable skills for teaching reading. Evidence was not found for other types of whole school changes, such as improved teacher collaboration, interest in reform in other areas, changes in governance, or changes in the relationships among administrators and staff. These outcomes, however, are not major goals of the SFA model. An appendix contains an overview of activities during the 90-minute SFA reading period. (Contains 2 figures and 43 references.) (SLD)

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AN "INSIDE" LOOK AT SUCCESS FOR ALL

A Qualitative Study of Implementation and Teaching and Learning

Amanda Datnow & Marisa Castellano

Report No. 45 / May 2000

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CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON THE EDUCATION OF STUDENTS PLACED AT RISK

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Johns Hopkins University

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The Center

Every child has the capacity to succeed in school and in life. Yet far too many children, especially those from poor and minority families, are placed at risk by school practices that are based on a sorting paradigm in which some students receive high-expectations instruction while the rest are relegated to lower quality education and lower quality futures. The sorting perspective must be replaced by a "talent development" model that asserts that all children are capable of succeeding in a rich and demanding curriculum with appropriate assistance and support.

The mission of the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk (CRESPAR) is to conduct the research, development, evaluation, and dissemination needed to transform schooling for students placed at risk. The work of the Center is guided by three central themes — ensuring the success of all students at key development points, building on students' personal and cultural assets, and scaling up effective programs — and conducted through research and development programs in the areas of early and elementary studies; middle and high school studies; school, family, and community partnerships; and systemic supports for school reform, as well as a program of institutional activities.

CRESPAR is organized as a partnership of Johns Hopkins University and Howard University, and supported by the National Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students (At-Risk Institute), one of five institutes created by the Educational Research, Development, Dissemination and Improvement Act of 1994 and located within the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) at the U.S. Department of Education. The At-Risk Institute supports a range of research and development activities designed to improve the education of students at risk of educational failure because of limited English proficiency, poverty, race, geographic location, or economic disadvantage.

Executive Summary

This is the final report of a two-year qualitative study of three elementary schools implementing the Success for All program. Success for All (SFA) is a research-based reform model that organizes resources to focus on prevention and early intervention to ensure that students succeed in reading throughout the elementary grades. The focus of this study was to examine (1) what happens when a school implements SFA and (2) how SFA affects teaching and learning. We draw upon data gathered in 61 interviews with school staff, 60 classroom observations of one hour or more, and relevant school documents.

Two schools in our sample, Peterson[1] and Gardena, began implementation of SFA in 1996-97. The third school, Bayside Elementary, adopted SFA in 1997-1998 and began implementation in 1998-99. All three schools serve large Hispanic and low-income student populations, and all are located in California.

Implementation Results. All three schools achieved full implementation of SFA. While Peterson and Gardena were initially selected because they were rated by SFA trainers as having "fair" and "good +" implementations, respectively, we found the differences between these two schools to be negligible. In our judgement, both schools achieved moderate-to-high fidelity implementations of SFA. The same was true of Bayside, even within one year. All of the major components of the program were in place and, for the most part, functioning as planned. Almost all teachers implemented the majority of the SFA curriculum in their classrooms, but made adaptations ranging from minor to quite significant. These findings point to the speed with which the schools achieved full implementation of SFA, as well as the program's sustainability over three years at Peterson and Gardena.

The Adoption of SFA. Administrators influenced the adoption of SFA at all three schools. At Gardena and Peterson, the principals were strong advocates for adopting SFA and encouraged the staff to vote accordingly. At Bayside, the district strongly encouraged the school (and several other low performers in the district) to adopt SFA. While the majority of teachers voted in favor of SFA in all three schools, some teachers were not truly supportive of the program at the outset.

Building Capacity for Implementation. We analyzed how the schools arranged resources, staffing, and classrooms to build capacity for SFA implementation initially and over time. Our findings in this area include the following:

1. Fiscal resources played a very important role;
2. All three schools hired and retained very competent SFA facilitators and a sufficient cadre of tutors;
3. The assignment of students and teachers to reading groups appeared to work smoothly in all three schools, after some initial problems;

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[1] Pseudonyms are used in this report for all school, district, and person names.

4. Teachers were generally pleased with the English materials, but had some complaints about the Spanish versions;
5. All three schools struggled to make the Roots and Wings component level meetings effective;
6. Training for SFA was regarded as mostly sufficient, although implementation visits appeared less positively regarded; and
7. The passage of Proposition 227 in California created implementation difficulties, particularly at Gardena and Peterson.

Levels of Support for SFA. Our findings show support for SFA among most key stakeholders at all three schools. Teachers' opinions were most variable, however, ranging from strong support for SFA, to acceptance of the program, to vehement dislike among a handful of teachers. The majority of teachers did support the program and those who merely accepted it were willing to implement it. Only a very small number of teachers were completely resistant. However, those resistant teachers — as well as those who only just accepted the program — caused concern for principals and facilitators alike. All three schools had very strong facilitators and principals who worked hard to bring teachers along and to implement SFA fully, but they were not always successful. District and parent support for SFA seemed reasonably strong in all three cases, with district support being particularly strong at Bayside.

The Effect of SFA on Student Engagement and Classroom Instructional Practice. The implementation of SFA positively affected reading instruction in all three schools. We found that student attention/academic engaged time during our SFA observations was high, and higher than during our observations of non-SFA academic class time. SFA class time was characterized as being strong in most elements of effective classroom practice (e.g., high expectations, dialogue among students) and stronger than non-SFA class time in most areas. At the same time, we observed a predominance of whole-group direct instruction and little evidence of the curriculum fostering students' personal and cultural identities in both SFA and non-SFA classes.

The Effect of SFA on Teachers' Professional Lives. Some teachers believed that SFA had enhanced their teaching abilities and made their professional lives more rewarding. However, the most common opinion among teachers was that teaching SFA was quite demanding and that it constrained their autonomy and creativity, thus contributing negatively to their professional lives. Despite this, most teachers were willing to continue with the program because they believed it was effective for students.

Conclusions and Implications. In short, several positive things occurred when the schools we studied implemented SFA: (1) students' engagement in reading was high; (2) classroom instruction during reading was more effective (in comparison to academic subjects other than reading); and (3) teachers acquired new, valuable skills for teaching reading. All of these positive changes were specifically related to reading. We did not, however, find substantial evidence for other types of whole school changes (e.g., improved teacher collaboration, interest in reform in other subject areas, changes in governance structures or relations between staff and administration) occurring as a result of SFA implementation in these schools. Indeed, these are not the major goals of the SFA reform model.

Acknowledgments

We wish to thank Education Partners for their assistance and the teachers, principals, and facilitators of the three schools in this study for welcoming us into their schools and classrooms and sharing their insights. We also wish to thank Robert Slavin, Sam Stringfield, and Robert Cooper for their comments on this report and/or an earlier paper on this study.

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Introduction

Success for All (SFA) is a research-based, whole-school reform model that organizes resources to focus on prevention and early intervention to ensure that students succeed in reading throughout the elementary grades (Slavin et al., 1996). Success for All was developed by Robert Slavin, Nancy Madden, and a team at Johns Hopkins University, and is now based at the Success for All Foundation in Baltimore, Maryland. Major components of SFA include a 90-minute reading period every day; the regrouping of students into smaller, homogeneous groups for reading instruction, eight-week assessments; cooperative learning; and one-to-one tutoring. The Success for All reading curriculum is comprised of an Early Learning program for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students; Reading Roots, a beginning reading program; and Reading Wings, its upper-elementary counterpart (Slavin et al., 1992). There are both English and Spanish versions of the program; the Spanish version of SFA is called *Exito Para Todos*.

Success for All is a reform model that takes an aggressive approach to changing teaching and learning. As a result, the program is highly specified and comprehensive with respect to implementation guidelines and materials for students and teachers. Almost all materials for students are provided, including reading booklets and assessments for the primary grades, materials to accompany various textbook series and novels for the upper grades, and workbooks and activity sheets for all grade levels. Teachers are expected to follow SFA lesson plans closely, which involve an active pacing of multiple activities during the 90-minute reading period. Each activity has a particular time allotment as do particular lessons, which are intended to last two to three days in Roots and five days in Wings (Madden, Livingston, & Cummings, 1998). (See Appendix for a detailed description of the activities during the reading period.)

The Success For All Foundation requires that the majority of a school's teaching staff vote to adopt the program before they will provide the materials and technical assistance. A vote of 80% in favor of SFA is required. The SFA program also asks that schools employ a full-time SFA facilitator, organize a Family Support Team, and conduct bi-weekly meetings of Roots and Wings teachers. The principal of an SFA school is responsible for ensuring staff motivation and commitment for the program, as well as adequate resources. The role of the SFA facilitator is to ensure the quality of the day-to-day implementation of the program by monitoring and supporting teachers, monitoring the progress of all students, and managing assessments and regrouping efficiently (Madden, Livingston, & Cummings, 1998). Implementation of the program is supported through ongoing professional development from SFA trainers and through local and national networks of SFA schools (Cooper, 1998a; Slavin & Madden, 1996; Slavin et al., 1996).

As of April 2000, there were over 1600 elementary schools nationwide implementing Success for All, and the number continues to grow. The scale-up of Success for All and other externally developed reform models is shaping the next wave of school reform in the U.S.[2] There are more than 1300

[2] Success for All is also being implemented in other countries, including the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Mexico, and Israel.

Accelerated Schools, more than 1000 schools in the Coalition of Essential Schools, more than 600 schools implementing the Comer School Development Program, and more than 700 Core Knowledge schools. Each of these reform models has increased the number of participating schools substantially over the past few years and some anticipate growth over the next few years. There are dozens of other school reform models, most with national support groups, most rapidly growing. The passage of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program in U.S. Congress in 1997, which allocated $150 million federal dollars to schools willing to adopt a research-based reform model, is spurring further scale-up.

Numerous quantitative studies of Success for All have found consistent positive effects on student reading achievement, as well as reductions in special education placements and retention (Nunnery et al., in press; Slavin et al., 1996; Slavin & Madden, 1999). Two studies of SFA have included qualitative components. These include the Special Strategies study (Stringfield et al., 1997), which focused on the implementation and effectiveness of SFA as well as other school reform models, and a study of the dimensions of change in SFA schools (Cooper, 1998b; Cooper, Slavin, & Madden, 1997). However, in both these studies, the qualitative data presented on SFA constituted only one component of larger mixed-method studies with broader goals. Overall, there has been a dearth of qualitative research on the implementation of Success for All.

In this report of the first comprehensive qualitative study of Success for All, we use data gathered in extensive interviews and observations in three Success for All schools to examine what happens when a school implements SFA and how SFA qualitatively affects teaching and learning.

Methodology

The data presented in this report were collected as part of a qualitative study of three Success for All schools that began in January 1998 and ended in August 1999. We used a case study approach, which enabled us to examine the process of Success for All implementation in real life contexts and allowed us to present the perspectives of those actually implementing the program (Yin, 1989).

School Sample

In keeping with the tenets of case study research, each case (school) in this study was carefully selected to ensure theoretical replication — so that it produced contrary results but for predictable reasons (Yin, 1989). In particular, we chose to conduct case studies of three Success for All schools in the state of California that fit the following specific, varied criteria:

1. A school that had been implementing SFA for two or more years and was experiencing implementation success;

2. A school that had been implementing SFA for two or more years and was experiencing difficulty with implementation;

3. A new SFA school that adopted the program in 1997-1998 and began its implementation in 1998-99.

Schools fitting the above criteria were recommended to us by Success for All trainers from Education Partners, an organization that disseminates SFA in five states in the western U.S., including part of California. Gardena Elementary School, which received an implementation rating of "good +," was recommended as fitting the first set of criteria. Peterson Elementary, which received an implementation rating of "fair," was recommended as fitting the second set of criteria. However, the trainers acknowledged that the differences in implementation between these two schools were not great, and indeed we found that to be the case. The schools turned out to be quite similar in terms of level of implementation and the issues they faced. Both schools began implementation of SFA in 1996-97. When our study began, both schools used the Spanish version of Success for All, *Exito Para Todos*, with approximately half of their students.

In order to find a new SFA school fitting the third set of criteria, the trainers at Education Partners suggested that we attend an SFA "Awareness Presentation," which was being conducted for three schools in one district. We attended the session and approached a district administrator for a recommendation. Bayside Elementary was recommended to us. This school voted to adopt Success for All in the middle of the 1997-1998 school year, and it began implementation in the fall of 1998.

All three schools serve large Hispanic and low-income student populations, and all are located in California. However, they have rather unique community and school contexts, which are described below.

Peterson Elementary, located in a small city, is one of six elementary schools in its district. In 1998-99, Peterson served approximately 400 students in grades K-5, of which over 80% were Hispanic, 10% were white, and there were small percentages of students from other racial and ethnic groups. The Hispanic population was growing, while the white population was decreasing. Eighty-five percent of the students were classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) and 98% were eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunch. Almost all of Peterson's students, primarily from recent immigrant Hispanic families, are bused from a low-income area of the city several miles from the school. Peterson is a Title I Schoolwide Project. The school offers a half-day kindergarten.

Gardena Elementary, located in a growing agricultural community, is one of eight schools in its district. Gardena serves a mix of students from low-income Spanish-speaking, recent immigrant families, as well as some low- and middle-income white students from families who are long-time community residents. In 1998-99, Gardena served approximately 500 students in grades K-5, of which 46% were Hispanic, 53% were White, 1% were other ethnicities, including African American and Asian. Forty-six percent of the students were classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) and 68% were eligible for the federal free and reduced-price lunch program. The 1998-99 school year was Gardena's third as a Title I Schoolwide Project. Gardena offers a half-day kindergarten program and houses a pre-school on-site (which is run separately and did not use the SFA Early Learning program).

Bayside Elementary, located in a growing metropolitan area, is part of a large urban district of over 40 schools. In 1998-99, Bayside served a population of approximately 750 students in grades K-5. Some of the students lived in the surrounding neighborhood and others were bused to the school. Seventy-two percent of the students were Hispanic and of those, 50% were designated as Limited English Proficient (LEP). The Hispanic population is mixed in terms of country of origin, length of time in U.S., and citizenship. The remainder of the student body was 15% White, 4% Asian, and 10% of other ethnicities. Bayside is a Title I Schoolwide Project, and 69% of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch. The school offers a half-day kindergarten.

Case Study Data Collection

Our two-person research team conducted a total of four two-day site visits to Gardena and Peterson. The first visits took place in February 1998, the second visits in May 1998, the third visits in October 1998, and the final visits in March 1999. Our schedule of site visits at Bayside was somewhat different, given that the school began implementation of SFA in the fall of 1998. We made two visits to Bayside in the spring of 1998 to find out about their decision to adopt SFA (after observing the SFA Awareness Presentation) and to make informal observations of classrooms. We visited the school in October 1998, after implementation of SFA had begun, and again in March 1999.

Interviews. At all three schools, we conducted individual interviews with principals, SFA facilitators, and teachers. We interviewed the principal and, in most cases, the facilitator, during every site visit. At Gardena and Peterson, we were able to interview almost every teacher in each school. At Gardena, we interviewed 18 regular classroom teachers and 2 other certificated teachers who taught SFA. At Peterson, we interviewed 15 regular classroom teachers and 1 other certificated teacher who taught SFA at Peterson. (There were a total of 20 classroom teachers at Gardena and 19 classroom teachers at Peterson.) At Bayside, we conducted individual interviews with 13 of the 41 teachers on the staff, as well as a group interview with 4 additional teachers. We conducted interviews with district administrators in each location.

Each interview with the teachers took 30-45 minutes and the interviews with the facilitators and principals averaged one hour or longer. All interviews were guided by semi-structured protocols and were taped and transcribed verbatim at the culmination of each site visit. Informal interviews with school staff were also conducted before and after classroom observations, in the staff room, and at other times of day.

Classroom Observations. We conducted extensive observations of classrooms (both English and Spanish) at all grade levels during the SFA 90-minute reading period and at other times of day. We employed a three-part observation protocol.

The first instrument, used only during SFA reading time, assessed the observed level of implementation of Success for All. This form was an adaptation of those used for implementation checks by SFA facilitators and includes open-ended questions asking the observer to describe any apparent local adaptations of the SFA model.

The second instrument was aimed at gathering rich, qualitative data about what happens in classrooms in SFA schools, during reading and non-reading time. This part of the observation protocol gathered data on such things as the nature and quality of classroom activities, the extent of constructivist teaching, and the degree to which students' individual needs appeared to be addressed by the curriculum and pedagogy employed. Here, we used a series of directed questions that were guided by theory and research by Cummins (1989), Newmann and Wehlage (1995), and Tharp (1997) on what constitutes effective classroom practice more generally, and particularly for culturally and linguistically diverse students. We answered these questions for all classrooms we observed. This was both a means for us to see whether SFA contributed to these effective practices, and a way to see whether teachers incorporated other effective teaching strategies.

The third part of our observation protocol involved a modified version of an instrument called the Classroom Observation Measure (COM). The COM was developed at the University of Memphis and has been validated in extensive pilot research and other studies of elementary school classroom instruction (Ross, Smith, Lohr, & McNelis, 1994). The COM includes both interval coding, obtained through systematic and relatively objective data recording, and holistic ratings and descriptions that reflect more global, subjective impressions of the classroom activities observed (Ross et al.,1994). A detailed manual describing the observation procedures and operationally-defined categories accompanies the COM.

In order not to replicate information gathered in other parts of our observation protocol, we used only certain parts of the COM:

Part III: Interval Coding. This section was used to record observations from nine one-minute segments coded at five-minute intervals in the areas of (a) subject(s) taught, (b) teacher orientation (e.g., teacher-led, small group), (c) student attention/focus, and (d) academic engaged time, among others.

Part IV: Overall Observation. This section was used to record the extent to which different teaching and learning approaches (e.g., cooperative learning, direct instruction, seatwork, use of computers) were used during the overall observation. In order to customize the COM for use in this study, we also asked the observer to rate the extent to which there was evidence of SFA in the observed lesson.

Due to the extensiveness of data collection and analyses, only major results from the COM analysis are presented in this report with an emphasis on identifying issues that are most salient to the goals of this study.

Qualitative Data Analysis

We analyzed transcripts and notes from a total of 61 interviews and field notes from 60 classroom observations. This analysis was accomplished by coding transcripts for specific issues and themes and compiling that data in reports for comparison across and within schools. We analyzed classroom observation data gathered with the COM using Microsoft Excel to calculate means and frequencies.

The qualitative classroom observation data was analyzed by compiling answers to each directed question and assessing themes in the responses.

Using these data, we wrote case reports on each school and developed within- and cross-case data displays (Miles & Huberman, 1998). The case reports facilitated cross-site comparisons and helped us identify emergent themes. In order to ensure the validity of our findings, we shared a draft of a paper on the study (Datnow & Castellano, in press) with SFA trainers who were familiar with the schools we studied. We also consulted with these trainers and with SFA developers Robert Slavin and Nancy Madden about desired fidelity of implementation to the SFA model. Their opinions informed our assessments of the level of implementation achieved at each school.

The Implementation of Success for All

Choosing Success for All: The Adoption Process

Studies have found that *how* schools go about adopting a reform design is of critical importance (Bodilly, 1998; Datnow, 1999; Stringfield, 1998; Stringfield et al., 1997). Schools' choices for reform are the product of a dynamic relationship among practical, often previously existing conditions (e.g., time constraints, district policies), school cultures, and diverse peoples' goals and actions in many interacting sites and settings (Datnow, 1999; Datnow, Hubbard, & Mehan, 1998). In general, schools are more successful in implementing reform when local educators are able to explore numerous options and choose a reform strategy they believe to be well matched to the needs of their particular school (Stringfield, 1998).

Through awareness presentations, SFA trainers attempt to ensure that all teachers make informed choices about the reform. The Success for All Foundation has acknowledged that mandated change can create tension and thwart implementation, and thus it now requires that 80% of the teachers in a school considering SFA must vote in favor of the program to adopt it. Prior studies of SFA have also documented the importance of teacher buy-in, of leadership from principals and facilitators, and of districts allowing schools to make unpressured decisions to adopt the program (Cooper, 1998b).

In this study, we found that at both Peterson and Gardena, the principals were strong proponents of adopting SFA. In both cases, they were concerned about low student achievement and family literacy skills. At Peterson, Success for All was initially suggested to the school's co-principal by a grant writer, who had been employed to help write a Title VII grant to improve the school's bilingual and early literacy programs. The principal, already somewhat familiar with SFA, invited SFA trainers to do an awareness presentation on the program. After the presentation, a vote was held. The teachers at Peterson did not vote in favor of the program, in part because the school had not yet received the Title VII grant money, and teachers felt that it was not affordable. In addition, teachers were concerned about the structured nature of the program and the materials.

When they finally received the Title VII grant, the staff at Peterson realized that they needed a research-based bilingual literacy program in order to use the funding. The principal searched for other

comparable programs but found that none were as well substantiated by research as SFA. The teachers agreed to have the SFA trainers visit the school one more time to answer questions about the program. After their visit, the principal impressed upon the teachers the need to adopt a program. The staff took another vote, resulting in 18 teachers in favor of SFA and only one against. Several teachers noted that they were not given any options, since SFA was the only bilingual reading program that had "statistics behind it," which was the Title VII grant requirement. Some teachers were still not fully sold on the program, even though they voted for it. One teacher remarked that most teachers thought SFA would be "dry and boring…But then when we looked at our test scores and we realized… it couldn't have gotten much worse. It's worth trying something." In 1996-97, Peterson received a three-year Title VII grant, which they used to fully implement a new bilingual literacy program, which included SFA. The literacy program also involved teacher peer coaching, conflict resolution, and a five-week kindergarten readiness and family literacy program. The staff received SFA training in November 1996 and began implementation in January 1997.

At Gardena, the (now former) principal and her leadership team, which included several teachers, attended a presentation about SFA at the county office. At the break in the presentation, the principal was said to have declared, "That's the program we're going to get." Printed information on SFA was disseminated to the staff, as was information on the Accelerated Schools program. The staff also considered expanding the Reading Recovery program already present at the school. The leadership team visited two SFA schools in the region. Both the principal and the staff agreed that Gardena matched the demographic profile of schools that had achieved results from SFA. The staff was also interested in a program that had both English and Spanish components.

The principal of Gardena invited SFA trainers to conduct an awareness presentation at the school site. After hearing the presentation, a vote was held. Eighty percent of the teachers voted in favor of SFA, but according to a teacher, "Some of the [teachers] felt railroaded," because the principal was so enthusiastic about the program. Another teacher disagreed, saying, "It was a fairly collaborative process." In the end, the teachers agreed that the school needed something to help raise student achievement and therefore were willing to try SFA. There was speculation that some teacher resistance to SFA was related to a preference for whole language and Reading Recovery, approaches that the school had used previously. The district supported the adoption of SFA and committed some fiscal resources to it. The staff began implementation of SFA in the fall of 1996, after receiving training in the summer. A new principal, Robert Mitchell, also assumed leadership of the school at that time.

While district administrators supported the adoption of SFA at Gardena and Peterson, in neither case did they pressure the schools to adopt it. On the other hand, Bayside's introduction to SFA came by way of the district. After extensively researching SFA, visiting SFA schools in other districts, and winning the support of the school board, a high-level district administrator strongly encouraged ten low-performing schools to adopt SFA. She explained: "I've done my homework. SFA is the only model that does anything." SFA fit well with the district's goal of having all students reading at grade level. The carrots for schools were generous — the district offered to pay fully for the first three years of SFA implementation. In addition, the sticks were sharp — the district informed the schools that if

they chose not to adopt SFA, they would need to develop their own literacy programs and achieve comparable gains, without support from the district.

After attending the SFA awareness presentation and hearing from a group of teachers who had observed SFA at another school, the Bayside staff discussed the pros and cons of the program. Supporters, including the principal, argued that they were already doing a schoolwide block of time for reading, and SFA would fine-tune their methods. Second, something had to be done to improve achievement. However, some of the veteran teachers were hesitant about SFA and felt that the district was coercing them and their principal to adopt yet another program. As one of these teachers remarked in an interview, "The people at the top threatened the principals." According to the principal, "The clincher was when one teacher said, 'Look guys, this is reality. If we don't do this, then which one of you is going to work over the summer to develop and design a program?'" After deliberation, the staff voted unanimously to adopt SFA. Seven of the ten other low-achieving schools in the district also voted to adopt SFA.

In sum, administrators influenced the adoption of SFA in all three schools. At Bayside, the impetus for SFA actually came from the district level. At Gardena and Peterson, it was the principals who encouraged staff to vote positively for SFA. In all cases, these administrators achieved a positive vote for SFA among the majority of their staff; however, genuine buy-in among all teachers was not apparent.

Building Capacity for and Achieving Implementation of SFA

The quality and completeness of Success for All implementation are highly correlated with student achievement gains (Nunnery et al., in press). It is important to note that all three schools in this study could be considered fully functional SFA schools according to the guidelines set forth by the developers. Slavin and Madden (1998) state:

> A fully functional Success for All school will always implement our kindergarten program and reading program in grades 1-5 or 1-6, will have at least one tutor for first-graders, and will have a full-time facilitator and a family support team. Other elements, such as preschool and a full-day kindergarten, are optional, and schools vary in the number of tutors, the staff time devoted to family support, and other features (p. 5).

Gardena and Peterson had both achieved complete implementation of SFA when we began to study them in 1998, and Bayside achieved complete implementation of SFA within their first year of implementation. In our judgement, all three schools implemented SFA at a moderate-to-high level of quality. All of the major components of the program were in place and, for the most part, functioning as planned. The majority of teachers implemented the bulk of the SFA curriculum in their classrooms. We regard these findings as impressive, as very few reforms achieve this level of implementation, let alone sustain it, through the third year of reform. SFA is known for its speed and ease of implementation as compared with other whole-school reform models (Bodilly, 1998). This is due in

large part to the program's high level of prescriptiveness with respect to implementation guidelines, pedagogical practices, and materials.

In this section, we discuss how the schools arranged resources, staffing, and instruction to build capacity for SFA implementation initially and over time. We discuss how key features of the SFA program, including the materials, assessments, and component level meetings, were implemented at each site. In doing so, we highlight successes and challenges that occurred during SFA implementation.

Fiscal Resources. Fiscal resources play a very important role in the implementation of Success for All. The approximate costs for a school of about 500 students in pre-K to grade 5 range from $70,000 to $75,000 for Year 1; $26,000 to $30,000 for Year 2; and $20,000 to $23,000 for Year 3. These estimates include training, materials, follow-up visits, and other services. However, additional funding is required for a full-time facilitator (who is a certificated teacher), tutors, and, if possible, a family-support provider.

As noted earlier, Peterson acquired a three-year Title VII grant which they used to support the implementation of SFA, as well as other bilingual literacy initiatives at the school. This funding paid for the facilitator's salary, the materials, some of the tutors, and one day per week of the co-principal's salary. At Gardena, SFA was funded through Title I money, a Title VII grant, and state funding for a reading specialist, which was used initially to pay the facilitator's salary. The facilitator at Gardena was paid for a four-day week, due to funding constraints. School-based and Title I funds were used to pay for instructional aides. The district also contributed $10,000 during the first year of implementation. At Bayside, the district paid for all costs associated with SFA. According to the superintendent, these costs were higher than initially anticipated, as Bayside is a large school. The principal had to lobby the district for additional funds totaling approximately $150,000 in the first year to fully pay for the facilitator's salary, training, and materials.

The high cost of implementing SFA caused concern at all three schools, particularly with regard to how to support the program over time. Bayside had been promised that the district would fund the first three years of SFA implementation, but some teachers worried about what would happen when that period was over. At Peterson, the staff worried that when their initial Title VII grant ended in 1999, they would have trouble funding the continuation of SFA. Fortunately, we recently learned that their Title VII grant was funded for another three years. At Gardena, concerns arose when the guidelines for the usage of state funds for a reading specialist were changed in 1998. Because the SFA facilitator would not qualify as a reading specialist under the new regulations, funds would have to come from elsewhere for her salary. Plans to account for her salary had not been made by the end of the 1999 school year, though the principal was firmly committed to keeping the current facilitator. At the same time, the school site council at Gardena had begun to question whether they were getting their money's worth on follow-up training for SFA.

Training for SFA. When a school adopts SFA, full training is provided. This training is in the form of a three-day session that typically takes place in the summer before implementation begins. On

the first day of training, teachers are presented with an overview of the major program components, including the Getting Along classroom management strategies and the establishment of the Family Support Team. On the second and third days, specific training is provided in the Roots and Wings curricula, and teachers split into two groups, depending on which level they will be teaching.

At all three schools, the initial SFA training was uniformly regarded by teachers and principals as well-organized and well-executed. We had the opportunity to observe a portion of the SFA training at Bayside. During this training, which was held in the summer before implementation, the teachers appeared enthusiastic about SFA and engaged in the training. The trainer from Education Partners appeared to be an effective communicator with ample knowledge of the program. The tone of the training session was very positive.

Despite positive regard for the training and the trainers, teachers in all three schools still did not feel fully prepared for teaching SFA and admitted that they had to learn as they went along. This was particularly difficult for some teachers, as facilitators often did not have answers to all of their questions, not having taught the program themselves.

Some teachers at Bayside were teaching Roots when they had been trained for Wings, or vice versa. This contributed to their feeling unprepared. In addition, there were complaints among teachers at Peterson and Gardena that the training for the Spanish version should have been in Spanish, since it is not an exact translation of the English version. Instead, they had to adapt it themselves. One teacher had a Spanish manual, and this was confusing given that the training had been in English. She was glad to receive the updated teachers' manual with Spanish dialogue. At Bayside, teachers received at least some parts of the training in Spanish and were positive about it.

Staffing Arrangements. When a school implements SFA, decisions need to be made about who will become the SFA facilitator, which additional certificated staff will teach reading groups, and who will tutor students. These are key decisions that affect the success of the program.

Facilitators. In keeping with the recommendations of SFA trainers, the principals at all three schools set out to find facilitators who were strong teachers and well-organized instructional leaders who would be trusted by the staff. Interestingly, Gardena was the only school that hired a facilitator who was already a staff member. Barbara Logan, an experienced teacher (20+ years at the school), was chosen to be the SFA facilitator at Gardena. She was a very enthusiastic supporter of SFA and was well liked by other teachers. The principal at Bayside hired Alice Dixon to be the SFA facilitator. Ms. Dixon had most recently been working in the private sector; however, she was formerly a teacher in the district and had worked with the principal at another school. At Peterson, Karen Berry was chosen to be the facilitator. She was new to Peterson when the implementation of SFA began; however, she had 17 years of teaching experience and considerable interest in the program. In a subsequent section, we discuss the role of these facilitators in supporting SFA implementation.

Tutors. Success for All requires that schools have "specially trained certified teachers to work one-to-one with any students who are failing to keep up with their classmates in reading" (Slavin &

Madden, 1999, p. 3). Tutorial instruction is closely coordinated with regular classroom instruction and takes place 20 minutes daily, outside of the 90-minute SFA period (Slavin & Madden, 1998).

All three schools hired tutors so that struggling first graders could get the tutoring and individual attention they needed. Peterson Elementary employed five to six full-time tutors (all non-credentialed) to perform the tutoring for first graders, and also had a number of volunteers who tutored the older students. Gardena employed seven tutors, two of whom were certificated teachers, to tutor first-grade students. However, this was apparently not sufficient and the principal was looking to hire additional tutors. Bayside employed six full-time aides (four of whom were bilingual) to tutor students and had four college student volunteers who also tutored students for two to three hours per day. One of the bilingual tutors was a certificated teacher.

Most teachers felt that the tutoring was very effective for first graders. However, upper-grade teachers often mentioned that there were no supports for the older children who were not reading at grade level. While the goal in SFA is to provide early intervention, some students without adequate reading skills entered the schools in later grades. When tutoring was not available, these students struggled.

Family Support Team. In SFA schools, the Family Support Team (FST) works to help support parents in ensuring student success. The FST focuses on attendance, parent education and involvement, and student behavior. This team may be comprised of parent liaisons, a school administrator, social worker, and counselor, or other key staff (Slavin & Madden, 1998).

The schools in our study took different approaches to the FST and had varying results. Peterson initially melded the FST with its existing School Study Team, but never articulated the purpose of each team. For this reason, the team was not very effective for the first two years. In particular, the group had difficulty with the structure of the FST meeting laid out by SFA, as well as the solution sheets they were asked to use. A teacher at Peterson also noted that there "wasn't a lot of follow through," in some cases. Yet, in others, students' behaviors had reportedly improved when parents had met with the FST and interventions were arranged. In the third year of implementation, Peterson separated the SST and FST and had more success.

Bayside implemented the Family Support Team easily and with enthusiasm. Bayside formerly had a very active dropout prevention team, which metamorphosed into the FST when SFA began. The team was comprised of a social worker, a nurse, the principal, the SFA facilitator, the attendance clerk, and other support staff connected with the school. The team met bi-weekly or sometimes weekly, depending on the need. Our observations of an FST team meeting at Bayside confirmed that the team was working smoothly.

The FST at Gardena was reportedly also working well. The principal took a major role in the FST, as he explained: "That was the part that I had the most direct coordinator involvement in... I assembled the people that I thought would be good at it... We just sort of made our action plan and that was really easy to follow...It was stuff that I was planning on doing anyway." Reportedly, the number of students referred to the FST began to drop off after the first two years. One of the key team

members left the school, which was seen as a real loss by the principal, but the FST continued to meet regularly. Still, one teacher at Gardena said she wished that the Family Support Team could be stronger. The principal agreed and was committed to improvement of the FST each year.

Reading Group Staffing and Space. A major component of SFA is the regrouping of students (across age and grade) for the 90-minute reading period so that each reading class contains students reading at the same level. The use of tutors and other certificated teachers for the 90-minute period is done to allow for class sizes of less than 20 students (Slavin & Madden, 1998). The facilitator places students into reading groups based on assessments. (This process is described in the next section.)

Overall, the assignment of students and teachers to reading groups appeared to work smoothly in all three schools. This was in part facilitated by California's class size reduction initiative, which mandated classes of no more than 20 students in grades one through three. This meant that creating small SFA reading groups was not as difficult as in schools with large class sizes at all grade levels.

Initially, in all three schools, some teachers expressed reservations about not having their homeroom students all day and questioned the effectiveness of moving students, particularly those in the early grades, for the 90-minute period, arguing that students need stability. However, over time, some teachers grew to believe that the regrouping of students was effective and worked well, even for the younger children. Others still complained that because they did not have their homeroom students all day, they could not do interdisciplinary instruction or make links during reading to other topics they taught to their homeroom students.

All three schools had problems to work out when they organized reading groups, but most found reasonable solutions over time. At Bayside, because many more students tested at Roots levels than were expected, some teachers who were trained for Wings needed to teach Roots. This left them very unprepared as the school year began. In addition to all 36 classroom teachers, 4 other certificated teachers taught SFA reading groups. The bilingual coordinator taught a group of newcomer students (recent immigrants with very limited English skills), and the special education and resource specialist teachers each taught a group, as did the librarian. At least one of these certificated staff was reluctant about this new teaching responsibility.

At Bayside, Roots groups ranged between 18 and 20 students and Wings groups all had fewer than 24 students. An issue at Bayside was the need for older Roots groups comprised of third, fourth, and even fifth graders. One of those groups was taught in Spanish. All special education students at Bayside were incorporated into reading groups for SFA. Space was at a premium, given that the school was under partial construction. As the principal explained, "we're bursting at the seams." A related problem was that the school was well into the first year of implementation before the facilitator had a permanent site to store the SFA materials and conduct tutoring.

At Gardena, 20 classroom teachers taught SFA groups, as did the Title VII resource teacher and the speech therapist. Gardena's small size and significant bilingual population made grouping difficult at times, particularly with regard to class size. For example, one Wings teacher said she had 17

students in her SFA group one year, and had 24 the previous year. She noted that the population hump had moved to the higher grades, so that one teacher had 30 students in her SFA group. Fortunately, they were reportedly a high-level, motivated group. In another situation that related to the small school size, one reading group was co-taught by the principal, the facilitator, and the speech therapist, who alternated days. While they were initially concerned that this might not work well, they were pleased at how smoothly it went and at the progress made by this older Roots group.

At Peterson, in addition to all 19 classroom teachers, the Title VII coordinator, a resource specialist, and a special education teacher also taught SFA groups. For the most part, the organization of students into groups went well, with a few exceptions from time to time. For example, a teacher explained that there was nowhere for the students who placed out of her class to go, because groups at higher levels were full. As a result, her whole reading group moved up a level, and she provided additional help for the students who were still a bit behind.

In the fall of 1998, the passage of Proposition 227, California's anti-bilingual education initiative, made the organization of reading groups more difficult. Schools were given very little time to adjust to the new legislation. All three schools sought parent waivers in order to continue bilingual education. Bayside's SFA program appeared least affected, as the school was just beginning SFA and thus was not relying on established patterns. In addition, almost 90% of Bayside parents signed waivers for bilingual instruction.

On the other hand, at Peterson, relatively few parents signed waivers. As a result, all but one class of first grade students were instructed in English in 1998-99, a significant departure from the primary language (Spanish) instruction they had received the year prior. Although all of the students in the one Spanish SFA class were first graders, they ranged widely in reading ability from pre-primer to second grade. Initially, the teacher and an instructional aide split the class into two groups and used different SFA materials with each of them. However, this was not working well. During our last visit to the school in March 1999, the principal had planned to try to adapt the SFA curriculum for use in instructional centers, instead of a whole-group setting.

Gardena obtained parent waivers for a total of 300 bilingual students. This included all bilingual students in kindergarten and first grade, but only one class of students in the second and third grades. In addition, students who had been in bilingual classes the previous year, and whose parents did not make the choice between bilingual or English-only classes, were in placed in Spanish SFA but had English instruction for the rest of the day. Some teachers pointed out that this was problematic. As one teacher questioned, "Well what about writing? I mean, what's the sense of teaching them to read in Spanish, [when you are] going to teach them to write in English?" Overall, Proposition 227 created complications and did not easily mesh with what both the school personnel and SFA deemed to be the most effective arrangements for teaching reading to English language learners.

Eight-Week Assessments. Related to the issue of grouping are the reading assessments, which are to be administered to all students in SFA schools initially and every eight weeks thereafter. The assessments are used to place students into reading groups according to their level. Every eight weeks,

students have the opportunity to be reassigned, depending on their progress. These frequent assessments allow fast-moving students to move more quickly and students who need extra help to spend more time with the material. Emerging readers are assessed on a one-to-one basis, whereas more proficient readers are assessed in a group test administration. The SFA facilitator is in charge of summarizing assessments, both initially and over time. Instructional aides typically assist with assessment.

Bayside struggled with the initial assessment of students, as well as the first two eight-week assessments. The facilitator only found out she had done things incorrectly (i.e., allowing students to miss more questions than are recommended by SFA) when the trainers from Education Partners came for the second implementation visit. She wished there had been additional training early on: "I wish they had spent more time with the assessment." In addition, she felt as though the directions given regarding testing did not apply well for their student population, which was largely bilingual and not "test savvy."

A complaint we heard from teachers at both Bayside and Peterson was that instructional aides were conducting the testing and making decisions about grouping. As one Bayside teacher remarked: "We're the competent credentialed ones and then you're using someone who's just tutoring.... They've never had anything [instruction] about reading." On the other hand, both the principal and facilitator at Bayside viewed the aides as highly skilled. The facilitator remarked: "They've worked for years in the district. They're extremely good... I can trust their testing." The principal at Peterson defended their school's practices by explaining, "Certainly the aides do assist the facilitator in doing the assessments, but she is the one who brings all the assessments together, and all the input from teachers and makes the decisions on what groups they're going to be in. An aide would never make that decision."

At Gardena, teachers seemed to have more trust in the testing and placement process. At this school, the facilitator conducted most of the assessments and, like the other two facilitators, took the teachers' opinions into account when grouping. A teacher explained: "[I]f you push hard enough, unless she totally cannot see any truth in it at all, she'll go with it, and trust the teacher's opinion, which is really nice." Facilitator Barbara Logan monitored individual student progress in the following way: "[W]hat I have done just on my own, I've got a file card on every single child in the school from when we started. The date they entered... and their test scores for each eight-week assessment and how they're progressing." Like the facilitator at Bayside, she too was concerned that students lacked test- taking skills. She explained that many students had done well on the SFA Treasure Hunts, but would then falter on the eight-week assessments, which were multiple choice. As a result, teachers began incorporating occasional multiple-choice worksheets into the reading comprehension exercises.

Materials. When schools adopt SFA, they purchase a full set of materials for teachers and students. All classroom materials (e.g., books, workbooks, etc.) are provided for Roots and Early Learning, and many classroom materials (e.g., workbooks, activity sheets, etc.) are provided to accompany a school's choice of basal reading series and novels for Wings. Detailed teacher manuals are also provided for Early Learning, Roots, and Wings.

A common complaint from staff at both Peterson and Gardena was that the materials were not initially delivered on time. In addition, one facilitator stated that she had never received a list of which materials to expect, causing some confusion. She mentioned she would have liked "more direction in how to set things up." At Bayside, these issues did not come up. SFA has substantially improved materials delivery in the past two years.

For the most part, teachers found the English SFA classroom materials to be acceptable. However, teachers of the Spanish version of SFA were upset by the lack of parity between the English and Spanish materials. There were far fewer options of basals and novels to accompany the Spanish SFA version. In addition, the Spanish materials purchased by both Gardena and Peterson included some inaccuracies in language usage. The Spanish Reading Comprehension exercises were particularly problematic for teachers because they apparently could not deduce the logic behind the "correct" answers in the teachers' manual. Since they could not explain to their students why the answers were correct, they could not use these exercises.

Teachers at Gardena and Peterson frequently mentioned typographical errors on worksheets in both the Spanish and English versions; some Bayside teachers also mentioned such errors, although less so. Some teachers also complained that the SFA posters that they were required to hang in their classroom were not comprehensible by young students; others wished that large, laminated posters had been provided by SFA instead of the teachers having to make them.

In addition to the ideas noted above, teachers gave a variety of other suggestions for improving the SFA materials. The most commonly stated suggestions included: 1) creating a "parallel" track of materials so that if students need to repeat a level they use new books, instead of repeating the same books, which some memorize over time; 2) increasing the number of novels for which Treasure Hunts are available;[3] and 3) creating Roots books with more colorful illustrations. However, teachers realized that the increased cost associated with this might mean that students could not keep the books, something they viewed as a benefit.

Component Level Meetings. In SFA schools, component level meetings between Roots and Wings teachers respectively are to be led by the facilitator and held bi-monthly. The main purposes of these meetings are to coordinate teaching activities, to discuss any problems that arise, and to share solutions and new ideas.

All three schools struggled to make the component level meetings effective. For example, in a 1997-98 survey conducted by the administration at Peterson, only five of 16 classroom teachers reported that the component level meetings were useful. The meetings tended to be complaint sessions where, as the facilitator explained: "Teachers are sitting there rolling their eyes." At the end of that year, both the principal and facilitator at Peterson acknowledged the need to revamp the component level meetings. The times of the meetings were changed to before school, and they were shorter (30 minutes) and more task-oriented.

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[3] In personal correspondence, Robert Slavin noted that changes have been made to respond to these two suggestions.

At Bayside, the meetings also tended to be complaint sessions. One teacher explained: "It gets to be a free-for-all in our meetings. Because basically it becomes a venting venue or whatever you want to call it because you get so frustrated." However, this could change over time as Bayside was only in its first year of SFA implementation. At Gardena, component meetings were held sporadically in the first couple of years and were no longer being held in the third year of implementation. Reportedly, the principal felt the teachers were attending too many meetings already and he could not require one more. Instead, the facilitator met regularly with all teachers individually, which took a considerable amount of time but which she felt was very effective at getting teachers' questions addressed. Yet, teachers did not have the opportunity to discuss issues as a group.

Overall, it appeared that the component level meetings were more about form than substance. Schools struggled to make them work, and all three were less than successful.

Implementation Visits. Each year, SFA schools receive follow-up "implementation visits" from two SFA trainers who monitor the progress of implementation, help schools solve problems, and provide feedback. These visits typically occur twice annually. Since all three schools in this study were within the Education Partners (EP) jurisdiction, the trainers were based in San Francisco.

Gardena and Peterson had similar experiences with the trainers from Education Partners (EP). In the first year, they were reportedly in constant contact with EP, solving problems as they came up, and the principals reported an excellent rapport with the trainers. In the second year of implementation (1997-98), new EP trainers were assigned to the schools, due to significant scale-up of SFA that year. Both principals reported that it took time to build a rapport with these new trainers, who were knowledgeable about SFA, but did not have the long-term experience with their school site that the former trainers had.

At all three schools, the implementation visits produced some anxiety among facilitators and principals. One principal found the rubric that the trainers used in their implementation checks to be discouraging. As a result, (s)he chose not share it with the staff after the first few times. A facilitator believed that the implementation visits should be opportunities for the teachers to ask questions of the trainers, instead of being merely checks that the program was being done as required. Another principal claimed to be comfortable communicating the results of the implementation check to teachers. However, (s)he admitted putting it off for months after a particular visit. At two schools, the principals and facilitators complained that the implementation visits should involve more direct, verbal feedback from the trainers to the teachers, instead of a reliance on the principal and facilitator to be "the heavy" in communicating the (sometimes discouraging) results of the implementation checks.

At all three schools, many teachers felt uncomfortable about the implementation visits, as they worried that they were not doing things properly. Some teachers admitted to "faking it" when these visits occurred, and then going back to their adapted version of SFA when the trainers left. One teacher remarked that the trainers were not open to her questioning some of their tenets, stating, "No, this is the way SFA, just the way Johns Hopkins says to do it." On the other hand, one teacher commented that she really appreciated the feedback from trainers who observed her class. Some of

the teachers who simply accepted the program or were against it said that they felt impervious to the influence of outsiders and thus conducted business as usual. Even so, teachers saw the trainers as knowledgeable, friendly individuals.

Although teachers often did not look forward to the implementation visits, some thought that the visits were useful as a checkpoint. As one strong supporter stated: "I think one of the big pluses of the program is that they do come back." She felt that the implementation visits kept teachers honest "because I think we all tend to fall back into our old habits and the old way that we used to do things. But when you know that someone's going to come in and see how you're doing [then you are more likely to follow the model]." In sum, the implementation visits received a mixed reception from principals and teachers alike.

SFA Annual Conference. Every year, SFA holds annual conferences for principals, facilitators, and teachers to gather and attend workshops and share ideas. In the past several years, these conferences have been held in several regional locations in order to maximize the attendance of personnel from schools around the country. We found that attendance at the conference was common for principals and facilitators and far less common for teachers. In part, this was because of the expense associated with travel and conference fees. In 1998, the principal and facilitator at Peterson attended the Las Vegas conference, as did the facilitator from Gardena. The Gardena principal did not attend. In 1999, principals and facilitators from all three schools attended the conference, which was held in San Francisco. Several teachers from each school were also able to attend, given that travel costs were minimal. The conference was uniformly regarded as a positive, rejuvenating, and enlightening experience by all who attended. It is unfortunate that more teachers could not benefit from this experience on an annual basis, due to local funding constraints.

Coordinating SFA with Other Reforms. Often, other school or district programs can compete with a reform like SFA for resources or time. We did not find this to be a major issue at the three schools we studied. At Peterson, SFA was part and parcel of the school's large literacy improvement program. At Gardena, SFA was their main focus; however, the school began to implement a two-way Spanish immersion program beginning in the kindergarten in 1998-99. The school had yet to fully work out how they would teach SFA to this class of students. At Bayside, there were no other competing reforms per se. However, the district appeared to hold tight reigns with regard to curriculum in other subject areas and, as a result, the teachers had competing demands for their classroom time. This was compounded by a new district requirement to add 30 minutes of reading time (in addition to the 90-minute SFA period) in the afternoon. Teachers in all schools felt pressure to prepare students for state tests; however, this did not conflict with SFA.

In addition, all three schools were in districts that were developing new curricular standards. This caused concern for teachers, even if it did not immediately change their practices. As the facilitator at one school described, "That was a huge, huge explosion when the standards came out. How are we going to be held to the standards? And how are our kids going to be held to the standards?" There was also concern about new state laws ending so-called social promotion. One facilitator commented: "It's just, what do we do differently?" As explained earlier, Proposition 227 had the most marked effect

on the implementation of SFA during the period of our study. All other interference with SFA was quite minimal.

SFA Curriculum in the Classroom. As mentioned earlier, we observed moderate-to-high fidelity to the SFA curriculum in our classroom observations. There were only one or two teachers in each school who departed from the model altogether, teaching reading during the 90-minute period but not using SFA materials or methods. This meant that the large majority of teachers were in fact teaching much of the SFA curriculum during the reading period. Still, we found that almost all teachers made adaptations to the program. The level of support for SFA did not necessarily predict the degree of fidelity with which teachers implemented it. Rather, almost all teachers made adaptations of one type or another, whether they were strong proponents of the program or not (Datnow & Castellano, in press).

The majority of teachers made adaptations regarding the *amount of time* spent on particular activities, typically spending more time than is allotted in the manuals. For example, one Roots teacher who was a strong supporter of the program remarked: "I have a very, very low, low group, and I move pretty slowly. I take a three- or four-day lesson and usually stretch it out to five." A Wings teacher stated: "I may stretch [a writing activity] or do a seven-day schedule on something [that should be done in five days]." A Roots teacher said she used a five-day schedule for the purposes of English language development, not the two or three-day schedule suggested in the SFA manual. However, this particular adaptation was seen as acceptable by SFA trainers, given the language needs of the students. She also incorporated lots of music, invented songs, and movement "to help all the kids get it."

While time expansion is acceptable in some circumstances (e.g., for a group of English Language Learners or a very low reading group), slow pacing across much of the school is seen as a major problem by SFA trainers. At one school, the teachers of Spanish SFA were having trouble fitting their lessons into the prescribed times, so they invited a trainer to come out to model it for them. As it happened, she reportedly could not finish the lesson in time either and thus was forced to give the teachers more leeway.

Some teachers chose not to do particular activities, such as "group points" or the "two-minute edit," or even the Peabody Language Development Kits (see Appendix), often because they did not feel they had time. Other teachers felt that some activities simply did not work with their students. For example, one teacher explained that her mostly first grade Roots group did not know how to work well in pairs, and thus she asked students to do writing activities as a whole group instead of in partners or individually.

Some teachers made other changes that significantly affected the fidelity of implementation. For example, a Wings teacher explained: "I tweak it," making fairly major adaptations so that it would be more interesting for herself and her students. For example, students might practice and perform a play based on what they read, which might take three full days. A Roots teacher explained that she had received permission from the facilitator to add "some color" by including a "free-read" time every day, in lieu of a prescribed activity. She also did not use the Peabody Language Development Kits every

day. According to SFA trainers, these are significant adaptations that affect the fidelity of program implementation.

The majority of teachers made adaptations for what they saw as pedagogical reasons, although some also admitted to adapting the program to make teaching more enjoyable for them. Most teachers, however, made changes in accordance with what they perceived to be their students' needs. For example, a Wings teacher stated:

> I feel that for me it's more important that the kids really get what I'm trying to teach, not to stick to the schedule. Because sometimes they're totally immersed in writing, and then you're supposed to say, "Okay, everybody stop, we're gonna move on to something else because time's up." And I just can't do that.

Another Wings teacher stated: "I work within the structure but work loosely...like loosely interpreting the Constitution." She did not adhere to time guidelines, but covered most activities each week. She let the "students guide" the pace. Another teacher stated: "I don't open it up and follow the recipe, I know what I need to work on and I do it. I would say I generally follow the SFA order but I don't feel that I'm enslaved to it."

There was evidence that the facilitators attempted to keep teachers on pace and to limit the number of adaptations, but in order to ensure continuing teacher support for SFA, some flexibility was required. Teachers at all three schools complained to facilitators about the lack of opportunities to be creative and the difficulty of staying on pace, particularly when they felt students' needs demanded otherwise. As a result, facilitators had to allow some adaptations so that teachers would continue to do SFA. For example, one facilitator told some teachers that they could "modestly change it and make it fit you and your teaching style," explained one teacher. This tactic was often used with the more experienced staff, whereas the newer teachers were usually more willing to comply with the SFA program. As one of the veteran teachers explained "I, as an individual, have been given a lot of freedom so that I can do that, and they're kind of staying off my case."

SFA trainers acknowledged that many of the adaptations we observed were common to other SFA schools. Still, concerns about the quality of implementation arose among SFA trainers when critical parts of the program were being left out or when time allotments were stretched extensively to accommodate students' needs. Indeed, the SFA developers acknowledge that teachers tend to move through lessons too slowly. SFA developers believe that "it is better to err by going too rapidly than to hold students back by going too slowly. It is not necessary for every student to master every aspect of each lesson" (Madden, Livingston, & Cummings, 1998, p. Monitoring-11), because of the iterative manner in which the material is presented.

Summary: Implementation of SFA in the Three Schools

Administrators influenced the adoption of SFA at all three schools. At Gardena and Peterson, the principals were strong advocates for adopting SFA and encouraged the staff to vote accordingly. At Bayside, the district strongly encouraged the school (and several other low performers in the district)

to adopt SFA. While the majority of teachers voted in favor of SFA in all three schools, some teachers were not truly supportive of the program at the outset.

Our findings show that schools effectively arranged resources, staffing, and classrooms to build capacity for SFA implementation initially and over time. All three schools managed to support SFA well, without interference from competing reforms or programs. However, the passage of Proposition 227 in California created implementation difficulties, particularly at Gardena and Peterson.

Not surprisingly, fiscal resources played a very important role in supporting SFA implementation. In addition, all three schools hired and retained very competent SFA facilitators and a sufficient cadre of tutors. The assignment of students and teachers to reading groups appeared to work smoothly in all three schools, after a few initial problems. Teachers were generally satisfied with the English materials, but had some complaints about the Spanish versions. All three schools struggled to make the Roots and Wings component level meetings effective. Training for SFA was regarded as mostly sufficient; however, implementation visits appeared to be less positively regarded.

All three schools achieved what we would consider to be moderate to high levels of implementation. The major adaptations to SFA occurred at the classroom level; however, it seemed that most teachers were implementing the majority of the SFA curriculum in their classrooms. In the next section, we discuss the level of support for SFA among key stakeholders as it related to implementation.

Support for SFA Implementation from Key Stakeholders

Teacher Support for SFA

Teachers are considered by most policymakers and school change experts to be the centerpiece of educational change. Therefore, not surprisingly, many current reform efforts are directed at teachers, and the involvement of teachers in school reform is seen as critical. After all, reforms must address the core processes of teaching and learning if they are to markedly change what happens in schools (Elmore, 1996).

Conducting extensive interviews with teachers at Gardena and Peterson allowed us to do an in-depth analysis of the level of teacher support for SFA at these schools. We were struck by the commonalities between the two schools in terms of teacher turnover since the adoption of SFA, the range in level of teacher support for implementation, and the ongoing challenge of maintaining teacher support for SFA (see Datnow & Castellano, in press).

At Peterson, according to the facilitator, the first year of SFA was a cohesive one for the staff, since all of the teachers had voted (albeit with some reservations) for SFA. Still, teachers had some difficulty adjusting to the structure of the SFA program, as they had previously created their own lesson plans for reading. In the second year of implementation, there was a turnover of six (out of a total of nineteen) teachers. Two teachers decided not to return to Peterson because of SFA, and four

left for personal reasons. However, some of the newly hired teachers were not supportive of SFA and left after one year. In 1998-99, Peterson hired seven new teachers. Some new teachers were hired because of the class size reduction initiative in California, which created the need for additional staff.

While the second year of SFA implementation was reportedly a difficult year at Peterson with respect to teacher support, the third year was more positive. The new teachers were mostly enthusiastic about the program, as they had been chosen on this basis. There were fewer complaints overall, according to the facilitator, because teachers were realizing that "the kids are starting to move along."

Still, facilitator Karen Berry felt that SFA would work even better "if the teachers modified it less." Achieving support from all the teachers was the major challenge to a high fidelity implementation of SFA. Ms. Berry speculated that if they called another vote on SFA, 50% of the teachers would be in favor of continuing SFA, and 50% against. Echoing this sentiment, a teacher explained: "Some teachers really believe in it... and some don't believe in it, or some don't like parts of it." Another teacher stated, "There is not this 'Rah rah, yeah, this is what we're doing'" feeling about SFA. Still, implementation continued and the staff felt that SFA was making a difference for students.

At Gardena, the level of teacher support was similar. There was a large turnover of teachers since the initial vote, partially but not totally due to the program's adoption. By the third year of implementation, only seven of the twenty teachers who were present at the vote were still teaching at Gardena. Some teachers who left on account of SFA complained that it had not delivered with regard to the Spanish bilingual component. In the third year, Gardena hired six new teachers. The principal, Mr. Mitchell, explained: "I told them at the interviews, 'It's really important that you know that we're an SFA school, and this is the kind of program that we do.'" He had taken this strong stance in interviews, because the buy-in among teachers hired the second year had not been strong: "They were glad to get a job, but they didn't necessarily come here knowing what they were getting into."

Well into the third year of implementation, teacher support remained the major challenge area in the implementation of SFA at Gardena. One teacher who supported SFA optimistically stated: "Teachers at Gardena overwhelmingly like it, some accept it, and a few don't like it." On the other hand, Mr. Mitchell noted that "a good amount" of teachers were demanding another vote on SFA. He was opposed to a revote, as he worried about the lack of support for SFA by at least a quarter of the teaching staff. In order to increase the level of teacher support, Mr. Mitchell was planning to show teachers test score data demonstrating that SFA was successful: "I want to have more numbers to show this thing is working for our kids."

Because teacher support and enthusiasm for the program were ongoing challenges to implementation at both sites, we investigated teachers' responses to SFA in more depth. In analyzing the teacher interviews conducted at both Gardena and Peterson, we found that teachers fell into several categories:

- Teachers who were strong supporters of the program
- Teachers who generally supported the program
- Teachers who simply accepted the program
- Teachers who were vehemently against the program.

These patterns were common across both schools. Table 1 shows the number of teachers we interviewed who fell into each category. Bayside teachers were not included in this analysis, as we interviewed only a small number of teachers there.

Table 1
Typology of Peterson and Gardena Teacher Responses to Success for All

	Strongly Support SFA	Support SFA	Accept SFA	Against SFA
Experienced teachers, present at vote	4	3	5	0
New teachers, present at vote	1	1	0	0
Experienced teachers, new to schools	2	7	3	3
New teachers, new to schools	0	5	2	0
TOTAL N=36	7 (20%)	16 (44%)	10 (28%)	3 (8%)

We organized Table 1 to include responses of experienced and new teachers who were present at the vote for SFA, and experienced and new teachers who came to the schools after the vote was held. The teachers classified as "new" had less than two years of experience, either at the time of the vote or when they came to the school.

Table 1 shows that the majority (64%) of teachers we interviewed at Gardena and Peterson either strongly supported or supported SFA, 28% of the teachers simply accepted the program, and 8% were vehemently against it. While the majority of teachers voiced support for SFA, the schools had not maintained the 80% level of teacher buy-in that SFA developers believe is necessary for program adoption. Because of their reservations about SFA, the "acceptors" are not counted as having buy-in to the program.

Table 1 reveals several other interesting patterns. We found that support for SFA at Gardena and Peterson did not directly correlate with teachers' personal characteristics, in contrast to prior research (Datnow, 1998; Foster, 1993; Huberman, 1989; Riseborough, 1981). First, most new teachers either supported or accepted the program; none were vehemently against SFA and one was a strong supporter. The finding that only one of the new teachers was among the strongest supporters of SFA is in contrast to the expectation that new teachers are more receptive to reform. Another surprising

finding was that the experienced teachers who were strong supporters of SFA had a mean (and median) of 30 years of teaching experience. This is in contrast to Huberman's (1989) finding that teachers late in their careers tend to be unreceptive to change. The experienced teachers present for the vote who supported SFA (but not strongly) had a mean of 9.5 years of experience (median=9 years). The experienced teachers who simply accepted SFA had a mean of 14 years of experience and ranged from 8 to 17 years of experience. Predictably, none of the experienced teachers who had been present for the vote were vehemently against SFA; these teachers had, at least in theory, made a conscious choice about whether or not to adopt the program.

The experienced (non-voting) teachers who were strong supporters had a mean of 5.5 years of experience, those who were supporters had a mean of 15 years of experience (range=6 to 23 years), and those who simply accepted the program had an average of 6 years of experience (range=3 to 11 years). The only teachers who were vehemently against SFA were three experienced teachers (with 5, 10, and 20 years of experience, respectively) who had been hired at the schools after the vote for SFA.

There were no clear patterns for teachers in most categories with regard to language of instruction or school. That is, teachers of the English and Spanish versions of SFA were more or less evenly represented across all categories of response to SFA, except for the fact that the majority of experienced teachers who were strong supporters of SFA were teaching the English version. There was also a mix of Roots and Wings teachers in each category, though the two who were most vocally opposed to SFA were teaching Roots. There were no strong patterns with respect to gender and teacher support for SFA. There were only three male teachers represented in the sample, two who simply accepted the program and one who supported it. There were also no clear patterns with respect to race or ethnicity: of the teachers we interviewed, 22% were Hispanic and 78% were White, and teachers of each background fell into the various categories of response to the program.

The teachers who fell into the "strong supporters" category were very positive about the structure of the program, agreed with its approach to teaching reading, and were favorably outspoken about the program at their school sites. The teachers who generally supported SFA were those who believed that it was a worthwhile program, who saw positive attributes in it, and who agreed with the general approach of the program (e.g., grouping students, cooperative learning), and most supported the continuation of SFA in their schools. However, unlike the strong supporters, these teachers expressed several complaints about the program, typically about components they felt were lacking and about the constraints SFA placed on their autonomy. Still, these teachers' praise for the program outweighed their complaints. Overall, the consensus among these teachers was that SFA was an improvement over their school's former eclectic methods for teaching reading, even though they may not have embraced every aspect of the program.

The teachers who simply accepted SFA, but did not actively support nor actively resist the program, tended to see more negatives than positives in it. Their comments were expressed both in terms of negatives for themselves as teachers, and sometimes in terms of pedagogical issues. Another common theme among several of these teachers was the belief that while such a program was

necessary for the school and for some teachers, they did not necessarily need it personally. There were program adaptations among this group, but not necessarily more than those made by the supporters. Overall, these teachers were not vehemently outspoken against the program at their school sites. However, the quiet (and sometimes not-so-quiet) lack of support by these teachers worried principals and facilitators, particularly if a new vote on SFA were to be held. The leadership typically attempted to appease these teachers by allowing them some additional freedom to adapt the program to fit their needs and desires.

The three teachers who were vehemently against the program were typically vocal about their opinions in staff meetings, and thus most other teachers were aware of their complaints. In our interviews with these teachers, we found that they agreed upon one major positive attribute of the program — an established 90-minute period of the day in which there was a sustained focus on reading. Their critiques of the program were numerous and tended to relate to materials and pedagogical practices, as well as to philosophical underpinnings. Quite simply, these teachers' ideologies about teaching and learning were inconsistent with SFA. They felt very stifled by the structured nature of the program and thought their students were stifled as well. Two of these teachers still remained at their schools at the end of the third year of implementation; one teacher had transferred to another site.

In sum, we found that more than half of the teachers at Gardena and Peterson either supported or strongly supported SFA. However, the group of teachers in each school who either simply accepted the program or were against it appeared to lower the level of enthusiasm for SFA and this concerned administrators about the future of the program in their schools. This finding is not unusual, as there are always teachers who resist reforms — whether created by groups inside or outside the school. At the same time, it seems that these issues need to be directly addressed at both school sites, because teacher resistance can derail reform efforts (Datnow, 1998; Sikes, 1992). Teachers in these two schools who embraced the program most strongly were those for whom there was an ideological fit about what constitutes good teaching (i.e., structured vs. autonomous), or what constitutes a good schoolwide approach for teaching reading — beliefs that did not directly correlate with experience level, ethnicity, or gender.

Teacher Support at Bayside. An extensive investigation into the level of teacher support for SFA at Bayside was not possible, as we interviewed fewer than half of the teaching staff, and we were there for only the first year of implementation. However, we did glean some important information about the level of teacher support for SFA. First, it is notable that there was a turnover of more than half of the teaching staff between the adoption of SFA and the beginning of implementation several months later. Most of the teachers who were new to Bayside in 1997-98 were also new to teaching (some with emergency credentials), and many were hired because of the state class size reduction effort. Many of the older, more experienced teachers tended to be English monolingual teachers, while most of the new teachers were bilingual.

It is unclear how much of the turnover was related to the adoption of SFA the previous year. Regardless, the turnover had an impact, as half of the teachers were not there when the program was

voted in. Principal Ana Serna felt that these teachers were supportive of SFA and enthusiastic generally: "The group of new teachers that I have this year are just great." Indeed, the new teachers corroborated that they had been informed about SFA upon hiring and were willing and interested participants.

On the other hand, support for SFA was wavering among some of the more experienced teachers at Bayside. As one new teacher remarked: "We have a lot of bickering. 'We want to do it that way.' Or, 'Can we change this?' Or, 'We don't have time for this.'" Another teacher noted that these questions were most frequent in the first semester, but that the voices were becoming quieter. Our interview with a group of experienced teachers six months into SFA implementation suggested otherwise, as these teachers were rather negative. After complaining about various aspects of SFA (similar to those noted by teachers at the other two schools), one teacher stated: "We would love to be given the opportunity to revote." A few experienced teachers interviewed individually were more positive about at least some aspects of SFA. One teacher stated: "I really like the program. I think many of the methodologies are sound... I find that I'm a little frustrated with the materials and the vocabulary."

As at the other two schools, the principal viewed teacher support for SFA as one of the critical areas on which to work. She stated: "I think the biggest challenge is to bring the teachers along." The principal attempted to maintain a positive attitude, hoping that with time these teachers' opinions would change. She explained: "I know I have some teachers who are reactive and we try to answer and sit down and brainstorm with them as to what their problem is, what we can do about it. The bottom line is that the program is not going away."

Overall, our limited data suggest that teacher support for SFA at Bayside correlated negatively with experience. The newer, less experienced teachers appeared to be in line with the principal's vision and supportive of SFA, whereas the more experienced teachers were more skeptical about SFA and saw it as yet another reform. These experience-level patterns did not hold true at Gardena and Peterson, as explained earlier. However, these patterns have support in prior research (Huberman, 1989; Riseborough, 1981).

The Role of the Principal in Supporting SFA

Reforming schools often requires a reshaping of the role of the principal (Carlin, 1994). However, the move to this newly defined role does not come without challenges. For principals, reform is often accompanied by role ambiguity (Hallinger & Hausman, 1994), increased time devoted to promoting the school's image, to working with parent and school boards, and increased time spent engaged in teacher development activities (Murphy, 1994). Being principal of an SFA school requires some of these changes.

The principal's training manual for SFA (Madden, Livingston, & Cummings, 1998, p. Role-1) states that the job of the principal is to be the "keeper of the vision." In doing so, the principal must (1) ensure that the resources are available to support SFA (e.g., to purchase materials, pay tutors, etc.);

(2) keep staff focused on essential goals of SFA; (3) arrange the schedule and rules so that reading occurs for 90 uninterrupted minutes each day; (4) ensure that the facilitator has the support needed to perform her/his job effectively; and (5) monitor and celebrate progress.

We found that the principals in all three schools made significant efforts at achieving each of these functions. However, each principal led the school (and the reform) in his or her own way. The situation was particularly unique at Peterson, where two women shared the job of principal, each working three days per week. One of the principals, Jane Walden, was chiefly responsible for overseeing the implementation of SFA. Ms. Walden had been the co-principal of Peterson for four years prior to SFA's adoption, and before that had been principal for eight years at other schools as well as a bilingual teacher. In addition to being co-principal at Peterson, Ms. Walden taught in the education program of a local college. This role gave her access to many new teachers, some of whom she invited to apply to teach at Peterson. The Peterson teachers and the facilitator saw Ms. Walden as a strong advocate for SFA.

At Gardena, the original principal who brought in SFA assumed a position at a local university and was replaced by a new principal, Robert Mitchell, who was new to the district and in his first principalship. Mr. Mitchell began his principalship at Gardena the year SFA began. He saw himself as a strong proponent of SFA. Bayside's principal, Ana Serna, had led the school for four years prior to the adoption of SFA. She had over 20 years experience in the district in teaching and administration. Ms. Serna was a strong advocate for adopting SFA and seemed eager to comply with district demands in this area.

As stated earlier, in all three schools, but particularly at Gardena and Peterson, the principal was a major force behind the adoption of SFA. Most often, the strong pressure from district or state levels to improve test scores motivated principals to push their staffs to adopt SFA and to secure resources for the reform. Subsequently, individual management styles, ideologies, and personal characteristics of the principals influenced how they interacted with teachers, facilitators, and SFA trainers in the leadership of the reform (see Datnow & Castellano, 2000, for more detailed information).

For example, the three principals varied in how much flexibility they allowed teachers with respect to the SFA reform model — with some requiring stringent fidelity, and others approaching the model with a more lax attitude. However, they all expected all teachers to implement the program and developed strategies for dealing with those who were wavering. One principal approached SFA this way: "I like to let teachers vent and say whatever they want to say…[but] this is our program and this is the way we have to go." Another principal tried to be as strict as possible with regard to implementation, given the community in which the school was located: "People come back from…these school visits, you know, these [regimented] SFA schools, which I would never — I'm not going to ever have them — it wouldn't be me…. for [this area]… we're about as strict as you can get." This principal also felt that a delicate balance needed to be maintained because too strict an approach could backfire: "…You have to remember there's always the possibility that all the teachers can say, 'We don't like this thing. We're not going to do it.' You have to make it palatable."

All three principals appeared to feel great responsibility for ensuring effective implementation of SFA. They appeared to understand the importance of their role as leader of the school and of the reform. For example, about not being present for part of an implementation visit, one principal remarked: "When they came out, there were facilities issues that were impending and some big decisions had to be made... I let myself get pulled away during our classroom visits and I should never have let that happen." On the other hand, this principal committed significant time to SFA by teaching a reading group one day per week: "I just have a feeling that in the long run, it'll make me a better observer." At all three schools, the principals seemed visible in SFA classrooms and very knowledgeable about the model. Our interviews with teachers confirmed these observations.

As we have described above (and in other sections, such as the one on implementation visits), there was variation in how principals' leadership styles meshed with the reform. However, all three principals made efforts to support implementation wholeheartedly. And this support was critical. As one facilitator summed it up: "This program is certainly a program that requires a very strong principal's support."

The Role of the Facilitator in Supporting SFA

The other key school leader in supporting SFA implementation is the facilitator. The role of teachers who are out of the classroom, occupying the position of full-time reform facilitator, has gone relatively unexplored in the research literature, in spite of the fact that many current reforms include or even require such a position. The few studies that do exist suggest that the facilitator role is important to successful reform and requires a delicate balance of activities (Muncey & McQuillan, 1996; Neufeld, 1995; Nunnery et al., in press).

The functions of the SFA facilitator are critical for successful implementation. The principal's training manual for SFA (Madden, Livingston, & Cummings, 1998, p. Role-3) states that the facilitator's responsibilities are : 1) knowing the progress of each teacher in implementing the program and providing support accordingly; 2) knowing the progress of each student and ensuring that no student falls through the cracks; and 3) managing assessments and regrouping efficiently. The manual further states that "the facilitator must be a mentor, and not an evaluator," and that the relationship between the facilitators and teachers should be "respectful and supportive." (ibid.)

The SFA facilitators in our study shared some common characteristics: all were former teachers in a late career stage, and all were women. While a sample of three is certainly not sufficient to make generalizations, these characteristics are consistent with the qualitative study of teacher careers by Sikes et al. (1985), which found that women teachers often pursue promotion and greater responsibility after age forty when their families are no longer as dependent upon them. This appeared to be the case for the SFA facilitators in the three schools. However, it should be noted that while the position of SFA facilitator brings with it a leadership role and added responsibility, compensation is typically on a teacher salary scale.

In our opinion, the facilitators at all three schools were very strong — well-informed, organized, good leaders, and well respected. By all accounts, the facilitator job was a demanding one that all agreed required a special type of person. When searching for a facilitator, the principal at Bayside explained:

> It's going to take someone who is going to be here day and night, and willing to take it, and it's going to be their baby, and going to make it happen.... It takes time, personal time, you know, time away from their family, and all.... Someone with the right personality that can relate to everyone, that can be accepted by everyone, who doesn't intimidate, you know. I mean, all of those factors come into play. And very organized, yes.

A teacher at Gardena expressed a common opinion about the role of the facilitator: "Her job is, I think, incredibly hard." The job was undoubtedly demanding for the facilitators at all three schools, but especially so at the larger schools, where the job of facilitator involved greater responsibilities for teacher monitoring, student assessment, and materials management.

In all three schools, the job was particularly difficult at the beginning when facilitators were learning SFA along with the teachers. One facilitator explained that her job "hasn't been as satisfying for me as I think it could have been. I think partly because I wasn't totally familiar with the program so that it's been kind of figuring it out on my own." Similarly, a teacher at one school described the early stage of implementation as "the blind leading the blind."

One of the key roles of the SFA facilitator is to closely monitor implementation. Because they were required to "monitor" teachers' implementation of SFA, facilitators were often seen by teachers as administrators or managers of the reform. As with the principals, how strictly facilitators monitored the program depended to some extent on their personality and how much they felt they could expect of teachers in their school. One facilitator explained that she felt the need to be flexible with teachers: "I felt that I was at a little bit of a disadvantage coming in as an outsider and never having taught Success for All.... So that was a little hard and I really tried not to be that hard on teachers. I really understand their plight."

At another school, the SFA facilitator tried to maintain a good balance of program fidelity and flexibility. A teacher corroborated this point: "She says try to stick to the [schedule], if you can, but do what you have to do." Similarly, another facilitator's general stance was that small adaptations to the program were acceptable, as long as there were not too many, and as long as teachers asked permission first. However, she deemed some adaptations unacceptable and would advise teachers against doing them. This caused problems for a few teachers, who described her as a rigid enforcer of the SFA model. As one teacher remarked: "What I hear from the SFA boss is that, no, you can't do anything but what's in these planners." The facilitator found such attitudes somewhat hurtful.

Despite the fact that facilitators may be seen as the "boss" of the reform, they were still able to maintain a good rapport with almost all teachers and serve as mediators of the reform. In all three schools, teachers directed questions about the implementation of SFA to facilitators who would either provide answers themselves or seek answers from trainers. However, building a warm rapport took

time, particularly for the facilitators at Bayside and Peterson, who were new to the school when SFA began. The facilitator at Bayside described what she did to earn the respect of teachers: "I went into all of the kindergarten and first grade classrooms and did a STaR story using not a book, but using props and stuff like that to make sure that they saw me teach. So they could see me as a teacher." At Gardena, Barbara Logan did not face such challenges, as she had been a teacher and a parent at the school for many years and was well respected in the school community.

The facilitator's job was easier when they worked in partnership with the principal, but had a division of responsibility. The principal and facilitator at one school shared the leadership for the reform in a way that is consistent with SFA's recommendation that the principal remain the evaluator and the facilitator be the supporter. The principal described: "[The facilitator] and I have worked out a real nice system where she's the good guy and I'm the bad guy." She felt that her position as principal allowed her to enforce the fidelity of implementation of SFA with more authority than the facilitator had. On the other hand, the principal at another school expected the facilitator to take more of a role in program enforcement, which created concern for her, since she was a member of the teacher's union and not an administrator. She observed: "I think [it is best with] the principal saying what we need to do, and here I am to help — that's my job as facilitator."

Consistent with prior research (Cooper, 1998a), local networks were a source of support for some SFA facilitators. The fact that eight schools in Bayside's district were implementing SFA allowed facilitators to network. Communicating with other facilitators allowed Alice Dixon to address problems without causing concern among those at her school site. She explained: "With the facilitators I have no qualms, and they don't either, of saying, 'Oh my God'.... You can't say it to anyone else.... The teachers just see I can handle this. So that's been very helpful having that." At Gardena and Peterson this type of networking was not possible, as until recently, both schools were the only ones in their districts implementing SFA. In the past year, one new school in each district has begun SFA and facilitators at both Gardena and Peterson reported helping address facilitators' questions. Naturally, this helped the new schools more than it did them. The facilitators at these two schools also fielded visitors from prospective SFA schools. About this, one principal remarked: "I think the county ought to fork over some money for that because we do all these...shows you know.... But then it's good for us to look good for the other schools." In sum, networking opportunities were useful, but did not benefit all schools equally.

District Support for SFA

All three schools enjoyed support at the district level for SFA, as well as the district's confidence in the principal's ability to lead the reform. The principal at Gardena described the district as very supportive of SFA. In an interview, a district administrator confirmed this: "SFA certainly has a lot to offer. We're supportive." The administrator was familiar with SFA, as it had been implemented in his previous district and gains were achieved quickly. He remarked: "I'm a cheerleader." When a second school in the district wanted to adopt SFA beginning in 1999-2000, the district was willing to

commit $30,000 for the facilitator's salary, which the district saw as substantial. However, the principal of the new school engaged in local community fund raising to cover other program costs.

The principal and teachers at Peterson also noted that the district was supportive of their efforts at implementing SFA. A district administrator confirmed: "...Our district is really committed to Success for All and we see it as something that has made a difference for kids' learning." Coincidentally, also in this district, a second school began implementation of SFA in 1998-99 and the district committed $30,000. The district also supported the new school's application for federal Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) funds to implement SFA. The district administrator mentioned that they had not provided funding for SFA to Peterson because the school had a Title VII grant to support implementation. However, the district has supplied both Peterson and the new SFA school with some funding for SFA tutors through a $70,000 community foundation grant which was "redesigned to support Success for All," according to a district administrator. The district also supported several summer school classes for SFA and hired only teachers trained for SFA.

District support for SFA at Bayside was most obvious, as the district pushed the school to adopt the program and helped to fund it. District administrators visited the school in the first year of implementation to hear teachers' reactions to the program and answer questions. The assistant superintendent also met with the SFA facilitators in the district. During this time, facilitators aired concerns and received supportive feedback. The facilitator explained: "She left us all with the opinion that the district is behind this program. Which is what we needed to hear as facilitators." The Bayside principal pointed out that the district was learning how best to support SFA at the school level. She believed that over time, the various departments would become more knowledgeable and better able to support SFA effectively.

Parent Support for SFA

School personnel reported that parents supported SFA at all three schools; some parents were just more passive in doing so. For example, at Gardena, where parental involvement has historically been low, when asked if the parents had given any feedback about SFA, one teacher noted that their attitude was, "Well, of course the school has a way to teach reading." On the other hand, another teacher at Gardena said that through SFA, the parents had come to realize the importance of reading. At Peterson, increased parental involvement was one of the goals of their Title VII grant proposal and as a result of efforts through SFA, as well as other initiatives, parent involvement "increased tremendously," according to one staff member. Peterson parents were reportedly very supportive of SFA and pleased with the progress of their children.

At Bayside, regarding the adoption of SFA, the principal reported one parent's reaction: "One parent said, 'If it works, and it's good for kids, I don't see why teachers would have a problem with it.'" A teacher at Bayside stated more emphatically: "I noticed a lot of parents had good things to say [about SFA at parent conferences]." Although staff at Bayside reported that parents were happy with SFA, many children were still coming to school without signatures on their SFA homework sheets. In order to address this problem, the SFA facilitator Alice Dixon set up a homework center. Ms. Dixon

explained: "This is not a detention center. They will be read with, they will be praised. They will be cheered. But it will not be a place where they want to come to necessarily, but it is not a punitive place." For twenty minutes per day (during recess), primary grade students who did not complete their reading at home visit the center and have the opportunity to read to a tutor, volunteer, teacher, or older student.

Summary: Support for SFA among Key Stakeholders

Our findings show support for SFA among most key stakeholders at all three schools. Although there was sufficient support among teachers to keep the SFA program alive at each school, there was not unbridled schoolwide enthusiasm for it. Teachers' opinions ranged from strong support for SFA, to acceptance, to vehement dislike. Some teachers' negative opinions may be explained by the fact that they felt pressured to adopt SFA initially, mostly because an administrator was in favor of the reform. However, the majority of teachers did support the continuation of the program and those that accepted it were willing to implement it. Only a very small number of teachers were completely resistant. However, those resistant teachers — and those that passively accepted the program — caused concern for principals and facilitators alike.

All three schools had very strong facilitators and principals who worked hard to bring teachers along and implement SFA fully. Not surprisingly, principals and facilitators managed SFA in ways that were consistent with their personal styles and prior experiences. District and parent support for SFA seemed reasonably strong in all three cases, with district support being particularly strong at Bayside.

The Effects of SFA on Teaching and Learning

As described above, the majority of the SFA curriculum was implemented by almost all teachers in the schools we studied. This meant that teaching and learning during reading time changed markedly for students and teachers. In this section, we consider the effects of the implementation of SFA on student achievement and engagement, on classroom practice, and on teachers' professional lives.

Effects of SFA on Student Achievement

Monitoring student achievement over time was not an expressed goal of this qualitative study of Success for All. However, we did ask the schools to provide us with data on how their students were progressing since the implementation of SFA. The results on SFA reading assessments were positive. At Peterson, SFA reading assessment results revealed that the percentage of native English students reading at grade level had risen from 17% in 1996 (when SFA began) to 34% in 1998, and the percentage of native Spanish-speaking students reading at grade level had risen from 12% in 1996 to 60% in 1998. At Gardena, SFA reading assessment results revealed that the average percentage of native English speakers reading at grade level had risen from 21% in 1996 (when SFA began) to 49%

in 1998. The average percentage of native Spanish-speaking students reading at grade level had risen from 19% in 1996 to 34% in 1998. We were not able to obtain SFA reading assessment results from Bayside. We are also unable to report on the students' results on standardized tests, as California mandated a new state test (the Stanford Achievement Test-9) in 1998, two years after implementation began at Peterson and Bayside.

To bolster these quantitative findings, in all three schools, we heard anecdotal comments from many teachers that their students were improving their reading skills with SFA. Most teachers saw marked improvements. For example, a Bayside teacher said: "Success for All is working. I can see. If I compare my students from previous years with the students I have this year, there is a great difference." He also noted that his Spanish-language students were transitioning into English much faster (i.e., at the end of third grade instead of later). Other teachers noted similar student successes with SFA. Only a few very resistant teachers were reticent to attribute positive effects to SFA, and a few of the "acceptors" of the program thought that it was not necessarily an improvement over past practices.

What Does SFA Classroom Instruction Look Like?

In all of the classes we observed, we took running notes of classroom activities, noting the actions of teachers and students and how teachers taught the SFA curriculum. These notes were not as detailed as they might be if we were conducting a pure ethnography, as while writing notes we were also completing the Classroom Observation Measure (COM) instrument. However, we found that our notes did capture the essence of instruction during the SFA 90-minute reading period.

Because an important part of our study was to provide an "inside look" at the implementation of SFA, here we provide two representative descriptions of SFA classes. The first is a Spanish Roots class and the second is an English Wings class. We deemed these to be examples of "good" SFA lessons. Each of these observations captures issues related to SFA implementation that are addressed in other parts of this report, such as the high level of student-teacher interaction and the quick pace of activities.

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Spanish Roots Classroom: First Grade Reading Level

There are 14 students in this Spanish-language Roots group, all of whom are Hispanic. Most students are first graders. Eight students are girls and six are boys. One student is absent today. The teacher is a young Hispanic woman who has been teaching for two years. She seems comfortable in the classroom.

The room is well decorated with plenty of alphabet posters, class rules, holiday decorations, science posters, student art, and pet fish. The SFA Yes/No signs are posted, as is the Word Wall for the last two to three stories.

Spanish is the language of instruction. Everything quoted below was spoken in Spanish unless otherwise noted.

8:40 It is the beginning of the 90-minute SFA reading period and the students are seated on a rug in one corner of the room. The class is on Day One of one book, but begins with a review of *Inez al Revés* (Backwards Inez). The teacher asks, "Yesterday we read a book. Who remembers the book's title?" "The Backwards Mouse," says one boy. "Backwards Inez," says another, and the teacher asks why she is called that. "Because she's backwards," someone replies. "What kinds of things does she do?" "She reads books backwards." "She eats dinner for breakfast," etc. The teacher opens the book and shows them some pictures to get more responses. She also talks about the illustrator, and how in this case, the author and illustrator are the same person.

"What was your favorite part of the book?" Participation is good; there are many hands up. The teacher asks more questions: "At the end of the story, why does the mom do everything backwards, too?" "Why did the mom kiss her feet?"

The teacher shows the students some drawings from the book. They raise their hands to say what part of the book it came from. "When it's raining, she doesn't wear an umbrella," one boy says in response to a drawing. Another comments in English, "Weird," about the drawing of Inez eating spaghetti for breakfast. As they go through each drawing, the teacher hands it to a student. Some aren't paying attention and she has to remind them to respect their classmates when they are speaking.

8:51 The teacher asks the children to close their eyes and turn on the computers in their brains. "Remember what happened first in the story." After a second, she says, "Okay. Open your eyes. Stand up. Those of you with drawings, put them in order." The students speak more English among themselves during this activity: "Randy, you go way, way, way over there," and a comment about a bicycle, to which the teacher comments, "*En español se dice bicicleta*" (In Spanish, we say bicycle), to gently prod them to use Spanish.

8:55 The students have put themselves in the proper order, and give back the drawings. "Now we're going to read The Little Duck in the Park." She dismisses the students by group back to the desks, which are clustered in groups of four. "Magic fingers — ready." Together, they read the entire book aloud. The teacher is walking around watching them, and reading with her finger too. They finish the book, and put them in the center of the tables. The teacher collects them, and asks, "Please stand, and put your magic fingers in the air. Our first letter today is one we should all know — U." All the students pronounce it. Then they all recite the directions for making the letter as they "write" the letter in the air. They repeat this for S, N, and, the teacher says, "a new one, R." The teacher asks, "What starts with R?" One child answers, "Rosa." "Okay." Another child is called on, who says, "*Sapo*" (Toad)." "No," the teacher says. Other children offer "*rabano*" (radish) and "*rama*" (branch).

One child asks to go to the bathroom. They are allowed to go, one at a time.

9:10 The class goes back to the rug area, and are going over letter flashcards. The teacher exaggerates the vowel shapes with her mouth. "Watch," she models.

"Now we're going to start a new book, The First Day." The children are seated around her on the rug. "Why do we learn to read?" she asks. The children do not have an answer for this, so she volunteers one: "To read maps and books." Then others raise their hands, but begin to tell stories about having to buy a map somewhere, rather than giving another response to why we learn to read. The teacher suggests reading the newspaper as well.

"Okay, now let's start the book." She shows them the cover. "What do you think it will be about?" Three different children answer based on the drawing on the cover, but they do not put it together: "An apple." "Pepe." "Ema." The teacher reminds them of the title, "The First Day," but she has to say herself that it is probably about Pepe and Ema's first day of school. Some students are not paying attention at this point.

"Who's gotten nervous on their first day of something?" One child responds that she got nervous on the bus to her first Girls' Club meeting. The teacher begins to read the story, in which Pepe goes to his class, but Ema doesn't want to. Her mother assures her, and when the teacher assigns seats, Ema gets to sit by someone she already knows from her neighborhood. At the end of the book, she is not afraid anymore.

9:24 The teacher is done with the story and fielding questions about it. She is fiddling with an audiotape. "Abby'll come out when the music's on and everyone's quiet." Tables that are quiet are getting popsicle sticks as counters for good behavior.

"Think of some words that begin with R." The words that came out were "*rana*" (frog), Randy, Ramon, and Rosa. She then asks them to stand up and she begins the tape. They have obviously done this before. The students begin to do the motions of the sentences on the tape: "*R recojiendo rosas, T tomando te...*" ("R picking up roses, T drinking tea").

After the song, the teacher says, "Let's see if Abby'll come out." Abby is a bee puppet (*abeja* in Spanish). Her antennas are a little squished. The children talk to Abby. Abby asks, "Are you ready for Halloween?" "Yes!" the children exclaim.

9:30 Abby (via the teacher) gives them a tongue twister: "*Rosa Ramos regaló radios y ropa al rey*" (Rosa Ramos gave radios and clothes to the king). This came from a card that the teacher pulled out of Abby's "home." Abby proposes, "I'll show you things, and you say what they are." The teacher shows some flashcards of objects that begin with the letter R. They go through several of those, and then Abby says she has to go. All the students say goodbye. But then she asks what she should be for Halloween. One boy says, "A bee." "But I am a bee," she replies. "A fly," says another boy. "A wolf with ribs coming out," a third says. "Oh no," Abby says.

9:35 The teacher posts a red NO sign and a green YES sign on the corners of the dryboard. "The first time through," she says, "I won't say the name of the object. If you think it begins with R-R-R-R, point to YES. If not, point to NO." She praises the correct answers. The next time through, she says the name of the objects in the drawings, and they point again. The attention span dwindles a bit here, so at the end of the activity, the teacher calls for a "mute applause" for the students who participated.

Next, the teacher shows them flashcards of the new vocabulary in the story. First, she says the word, then they repeat it. One girl must have her bracelet taken away because she keeps making noise with it on the table.

The teacher asks for volunteers to pass out chalk, erasers, and boards. Many volunteer, and are disappointed when someone else is chosen. "You'll all get a chance," she says. The students all want the best boards, so she says not to fight over them, they're all the same. But they are obviously not, since the students don't want certain ones.

The teacher is at the dryboard. One boy is unhappy with his board and throws it. "You'll lose recess if you do that," she says.

"We learned R today," she begins, and asks them to write the syllable "ra" on their boards. They do, and then turn it towards her so she can see it. "Can you think of a word that begins with that?" The students write, and one boy raises his hand. "*Ramon*," he says. "When I was in kindergarten I had a friend whose name was Ramon," says another boy in English. The teacher never comments on their use of English, but answers all of their comments in Spanish. Other answers are given as well, such as "Randy." "No one should be drawing or writing; we're listening to each other," she reminds them.

For the syllable "ro," someone said "Romeo." "How about one that's not a name?" No one could think of one, and even the teacher had a hard time, coming up finally with "*rosa*," the flower, not the woman's name. Everyone writes "*rosa*," and then erases it.

For the syllable "ru," the teacher asks, "What word can we make?" since there is no common word for that combination. One boy says "ruma," which they all write down and then erase. For "re," students came up with "*rete*" (an idiomatic way to say "very"), "*reloj*," "*rey*," and "*reina*" (watch, king, queen). "Okay, let's stop there. Volunteers take back the boards."

10:00 "Let's pick our books to read. Choose from the top shelves. Read at your desk." One boy runs to the shelves and has to go back to his seat and walk. Another boy complains that others have taken his book. "These are okay too?" someone else asks about another pile of books. They are, and one boy says, "Cool!" in English in response to a book in that pile.

Most students seem to be looking at the pictures rather than reading per se.

10:05 Two students are looking at the pictures of a book on Hawaii. One girl is modeling a teacher's reading style: reading a page, and then showing the pictures to an imaginary audience. The teacher claps twice, and the students clap three more times, completing the clapping rhythm designed to get their attention. They return their books by table and line up at the door.

10:10 The children are released to recess.

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From these running notes of classroom activities, we can see that the teacher was very smooth and pleasant, and worked with obvious interest in the children's progress and the stories they were reading. Success for All encourages teachers to spend time talking about the author, the illustrator, and the book as a physical object, which this teacher did. This helps foster a broader familiarity with books. It also encourages the children to dialogue about the book as well as the story in it. The class also engaged in meaningful dialogue as students went over the predictive questions for the new story. Our observation convinced us that the children found the activities to be challenging, especially putting the story events in order and writing words on their little chalkboards. The teacher gave them time to connect the reading to their personal experiences, in the discussion about being nervous, and in asking them why they thought it was important to learn to read. The discussions were not very in-depth, but they challenged this age group to express relevant thoughts. The teacher also used lots of positive feedback during the Yes-No game. Finally, she addressed different modalities of student learning during the game by not saying the name of the object the first time around, and then naming it the second time — children who could hear the letter at the beginning of the word but hadn't known it from the picture could still accomplish the exercise.

The teacher had some technical trouble with the audiotape and sensed that there was downtime, so she began asking them to think of words that began with R. This kept everyone on task and gave them extra practice. While the children seem able to speak some English (bicycles, having friends), the phrases they used were from non-academic contexts, and do not necessarily mean that they are ready for instruction in English.

This teacher had asked permission from the facilitator to include a "free read" time at the end of the SFA period. She did this because she had taught Wings last year, which does incorporate such time, and she felt it was important at this level as well. However, our observation suggests that the students were not spending the time very productively and could have perhaps gained more from the Peabody language and reading development activities of the regular SFA schedule.

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English Wings Classroom: Second Grade Reading Level

There are 18 students in this Wings group: 17 are Hispanic and one is White. Twelve students are girls and six are boys. The teacher is a young, white woman with a friendly and confident demeanor. She has three years teaching experience.

The room is colorfully decorated with student work. Paper maché globes made by each student hang from the ceiling. There is an impressive book display and reading corner. The SFA Word Mastery List is posted. There are SFA Word Walls comprised of starred words from previous stories. SFA charts for student reference (e.g., What to do while waiting, Cooperative Learning) are posted on the walls. There are two Macintosh Power PC computers in the room.

English is the language of instruction. However, most students do not appear to be native English speakers.

9: 15 It is the beginning of the 90-minute SFA reading period and the students are seated on the carpet in front of the teacher. This is Day One according to the SFA schedule.

The teacher begins by asking students if they remember what the folktale they read yesterday (with the teacher) was about. A couple of students volunteer answers describing the folktale aloud. The teacher says: "Today we'll do folklore." She has the definition of folklore on a piece of paper, which she asks students to recite aloud. She then explains what folklore is. She says: "Today we'll be reading *Legend of the Blue Bonnet*." She asks: "What is a legend?" A boy responds and she helps him answer. She then goes through the SFA routine of prediction, asking students what they think the story might be about. Two students volunteer answers. The rest of the group listens quietly. They appear attentive.

The teacher begins reading the story. She stops after the first sentence to ask, "What is a drought?" Before students have a chance to respond, she explains. She then continues reading with expression and enthusiasm; most students appear engaged. A blue jay comes up in the story. A student says he had one inside his house. The teacher acknowledges him and moves on. She asks: "Why did they use berries?" A girl answers: "Because they didn't have paint." The teacher then asks: "Why are her grandparents like shadows?" Two students volunteer answers. One says: "Because she never saw them."

The teacher notices that some of the same students are raising their hands each time so she says, "How about some new hands up?" She asks another question, calling on a student at random. The girl responds quietly saying that she can't think of the answer. Two boys off to the side of the group appear to be off-task, but the rest of the students are engaged.

9:35 The teacher announces that they will stop reading the story and she asks the students, "What do you think is going to happen?" "Do you think they will hear good news or bad news?" Overall, students seem engaged and enjoy answering questions.

9:39 The teacher says, "In the story we're going to read, *The Legend of the Indian Paint Brush*, there are some new words." She writes them on the board and students read them aloud in unison. She asks students to define the words (e.g., berries come in different colors, they can be used for painting), calling on them individually. She writes students' definitions on the board. This active dialogue between students and teacher about vocabulary definitions lasts for about 8-10 minutes — longer than observed in some other SFA classes.

9:47 The teacher leads students in reading the SFA Red and Green words in unison. Almost all students participate. The teacher asks students which words they do not understand. The students mention "teepee," "custom," and "tools." She calls on other students to define words, which they do. The teacher praises students often. The pace does not seem hurried.

9:55 The teacher tells the students to make a circle. She passes out Houghton Mifflin books with *The Legend of the Indian Paint Brush*. This transition takes about 3-4 minutes.

9:59 The teacher reads aloud from the book and students read along with her. About one-third of the students do not read aloud but follow along. The teacher says, "Take a look at the pictures and see if you can tell what the story is going to be about." A few students volunteer answers.

10:05 The teacher resumes leading students in reading *The Legend* aloud as a whole group, seated in a circle. About one-half of the students appear to actually read aloud. The teacher stops intermittently to ask students comprehension questions such as, "What does it mean that he has a gift of his own?" She asks students to turn to their partners (who are pre-assigned and whom they are seated next to) and explain what a "warrior" is. This is one of the Red words. The group then goes over the word "custom." The teacher asks: "Can you think of anything that you do in your family that is a custom? What about the custom when girls from Mexico turn 15?" A girl exclaims: "*Quinceañera!*"

10:16 Same activity as above continues: A fair amount of discussion and reading aloud in unison. Again, not all students read aloud. There is some partner discussion in addition to student discussion with teacher. Some vocabulary words (e.g., "deeds") seem difficult for the students.

10:22 The teacher instructs the students to get into partner reading position at their desks. They are to read the same thing they did as a group, taking turns. The students move into position very quickly and smoothly. The teacher walks around to check and listen to them read. The students seem to do quite well with the partner reading. They are all on-task and doing the activity properly.

10:32 The teacher calls students back to the rug. Again, they are seated with their partners. The teacher says: "Let's talk a little about what we just read. Why were Little Gopher's parents worried for him?" The students discuss quietly with their partners and then the teacher calls on some students to share.

The teacher says, "This story had a lot of new words and we took up a lot of time, so we're not going to get to our Treasure Hunts today." Instead, they will go on to the Book Club.

10:40 A girl stands up to give a Book Club presentation. She has organized a few other students in the class to act out the little book she has read, *Have You Seen My Cat?* She has brought in props for the skit. The students watching and participating both seem to really enjoy this. The students then give some comments to the student who gave the presentation. There is not much discussion about the substance of the book. The teacher praises the student.

10:45 Students are dismissed and travel back to their regular classrooms.

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Several observations can be made about the class. First, the students' engagement level was high. The students appeared accustomed to, but not bored by, the SFA lesson routine. The partnering of students worked particularly well, both for discussion and reading. Overall, instruction appeared effective: students had ample opportunity to dialogue with the teacher and to make some connections to their own prior knowledge and cultural experiences. The teacher's engagement level was also high. She did not appear to be contrived by the SFA lesson routine. In fact, she molded it to fit the students' needs and mood by extending discussion time. However, this meant that there was no time for (1) the Treasure Hunt portion of the lesson, which would have included discussing questions in pairs and writing answers individually, and (2) the "Two Minute Edit." The students also did not engage in silent reading of the story on their own before splitting into partners. This observation points out the limitations of what this teacher felt she could accomplish in the 90-minute reading period in terms of SFA, while still making certain her students grasped the material. At the same time, she taught a solid lesson that incorporated identifiable SFA strategies.

Not all of the SFA classes we observed ran as smoothly as the two reported here. At times, teachers appeared more contrived by the pacing of activities, often stopping student discussion to move on with the next activity. A couple of teachers we observed used a kitchen timer to keep themselves on schedule, which was distracting and seemed stifling. We observed interruptions by outside persons or announcements in a fair number of SFA classes, even though this is not supposed to occur. Also, we observed a number of classes where the activities (e.g., partner reading) did not go as planned, either because students were not working together well or not being monitored closely. Most often when we observed significant departures from the SFA curriculum, teachers were engaging students in reading-related activities that seemed generally worthwhile, but did not fit with the model.

In the subsequent sections, we move from the micro level of looking at one or two classrooms to the macro level of all classrooms across schools, comparing overall levels of student engagement in SFA and non-SFA classes and teachers' instructional strategies in both types of classes.

The Effect of SFA on Student Engagement

The modified Classroom Observation Measure (COM) we used provides nine snapshot intervals of a classroom during every one-hour observation. Two of the variables measured at these intervals relate

directly to the level of student engagement. "Attention-Interest/Focus" is a measure of students' attention to classroom academic activity. "Academic Engaged Time" is an estimation of the amount of time spent on an educationally relevant activity. Both attention and academic engagement have repeatedly been found to be related to student achievement gains (e.g., Brophy & Good, 1986). Stallings (1980) and Brophy (1988) both note that measures of student engagement should not result in calls for 100% academic use of classroom time, arguing that an 80% or moderately higher engaged-time rate is consistently associated with higher achievement gains, and a rate lower than 80% is associated with lower mean achievement gains (Stringfield, Datnow, Borman, & Rachuba, 1999).

The two COM items related to student engagement are scored on a five-point scale, where 0= "None/close to none" and 4="All." On each variable, an hourly mean is computed across nine observation intervals. Aggregating the scores across all intervals per school yields a mean, and averaging the two highly-related item-scores produces a more reliable school-level measure of academic engagement. Based on prior research, we commonly assume that a rating greater than 3.1, but less than 3.7 could be described as "effective use of time" on the COM (Stringfield, Datnow, Borman, & Rachuba, 1999).

Our classroom observations yielded a total of 58 completed COMs: 26 at Peterson, 22 at Gardena, and 10 at Bayside. We conducted the fewest observations at Bayside as the school only began to implement SFA in 1998-99. At Gardena and Bayside, we conducted observations without teachers' prior knowledge that we would be in their classrooms. Thus, they were unable to plan ahead for our arrival in their room in particular, although they knew that we would be in the school that day. However, at Peterson, the principal felt more comfortable scheduling observations with teachers, and thus the teachers knew ahead of time that we would be visiting their classrooms.

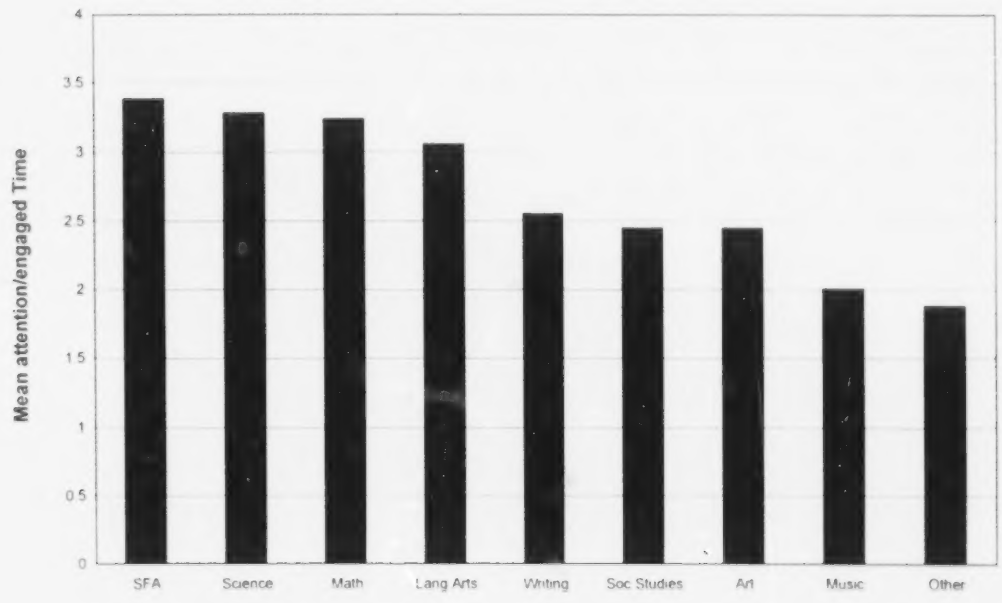
Of the total 58 observations in which we completed COMs, 35 were conducted during SFA instructional time and 23 were conducted during non-SFA time (e.g., math, science, language arts, music). We observed a fairly even representation of Roots (N=15) and Wings (N=17) SFA classes overall, as well as at each school. We conducted only three observations in Early Learning SFA (Kindergarten) classes. While we attempted to see a range of classrooms across each school, our observations during non-SFA instructional time were more often in primary grade K-2 classrooms (N=16) than in grade 3-5 classrooms (N=8). However, at Bayside, our only observations of non-SFA time (which were few) were in grade 3-5 classrooms. We saw many more classes in which English was the primary language (N=40), versus Spanish (N=14), or both English and Spanish (N=4). This was in part because when Proposition 227 was passed in California, the schools decreased (and in the case of Peterson, mostly eliminated) Spanish bilingual classes in 1999.

We compared the mean student attention/academic engaged times for each school. First, all three schools obtained measures of student engagement that were in what might be described as the "relatively effective" range. Gardena's mean student attention/engaged time rate was 3.16 (SD = 0.81), Peterson's was 3.10 (SD=0.84), and Bayside's was 3.17 (SD=0.88). Clearly, there are no major differences between schools in terms of mean student attention/academic engaged time. Studies using

similar measures of engagement often find similar or lower school-mean rates of engagement (e.g., Teddlie, Kirby, & Stringfield, 1989; Stringfield et al., 1997).

Since there were negligible differences between schools, we pooled data from all three schools for an analysis of student attention/academic engaged time by class type. First, we found negligible differences in mean student attention/engagement rates for classrooms in which instruction was in English (mean=3.19, SD=0.84) versus in Spanish (mean=3.06, SD=0.78). Second, we compared student attention/academic engaged time during both SFA classroom observation intervals and non-SFA classroom observation intervals. At first glance, student attention/academic engaged time during our SFA observations was substantially higher (mean=3.38, SD=0.69) than during our observations of non-SFA classroom time (mean=2.76, SD=0.91). While non-SFA class time student attention/academic engaged rate is low compared to SFA class time, and below the range considered "effective use of time," a breakdown of this time by subject explains a good deal of the difference. Fully 38% of the non-SFA class time we observed (which was typically randomly selected, not scheduled), consisted of art, music, or no subject (transitions, directions, etc.). Student attention and academic engaged rates were predictably lower during these times. For this reason, periods coded as art, music, and no subject were removed for the subsequent analyses. Another third of non-SFA class time was devoted to language arts (spelling, grammar, word games); one-quarter was spent on math; and there were only small amounts of writing, social studies, and science observed. Student attention and engaged rates were high during these subjects, as Figure 1 shows, and science, math, and language arts instruction were within the effective range. None of the subjects, however, showed rates quite as high as during SFA. In sum, student attention and time spent on academic tasks during SFA class time was high, and higher (albeit in some cases, slightly) than non-SFA class time in all academic and non-academic subjects.

Figure 1: Mean Attention/Engaged Time by Subject



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In many cases, we conducted observations of the same teachers during SFA and non-SFA time, and therefore we feel confident that these results do not reflect teacher differences. In other words, differences in student attention/engaged time appear largely attributable to SFA.

Corroborating these classroom observation data on student engagement are anecdotal reports from principals and teachers that students mostly enjoy SFA. In a 1997-98 student survey conducted by staff at Peterson, 94% of students said that they liked to read, 82% students reported that they liked their reading class, and 93% said they read at home. Across all three schools, the majority of teachers we interviewed noted improvement in students' interest in reading.

The Effect of SFA on Teachers' Instructional Strategies

Using data gathered in the COM, we conducted a descriptive analysis of the instructional strategies observed during SFA and non-SFA academic instructional time.[4] The data for this analysis was gleaned from the *Overall Observation* section of the COM, which asks observers to rate whether there was none, some, or extensive evidence of a particular instructional strategy during the entire classroom observation period. Where there was a presence of a particular strategy, most ratings were skewed toward the "some" response. Only "basic skills instruction" was skewed towards the "extensive" response. We were not surprised by this finding, given the fact that SFA instruction is by design skill-based, and in non-SFA classrooms, we saw many more primary grade than upper grade classrooms, as explained above.

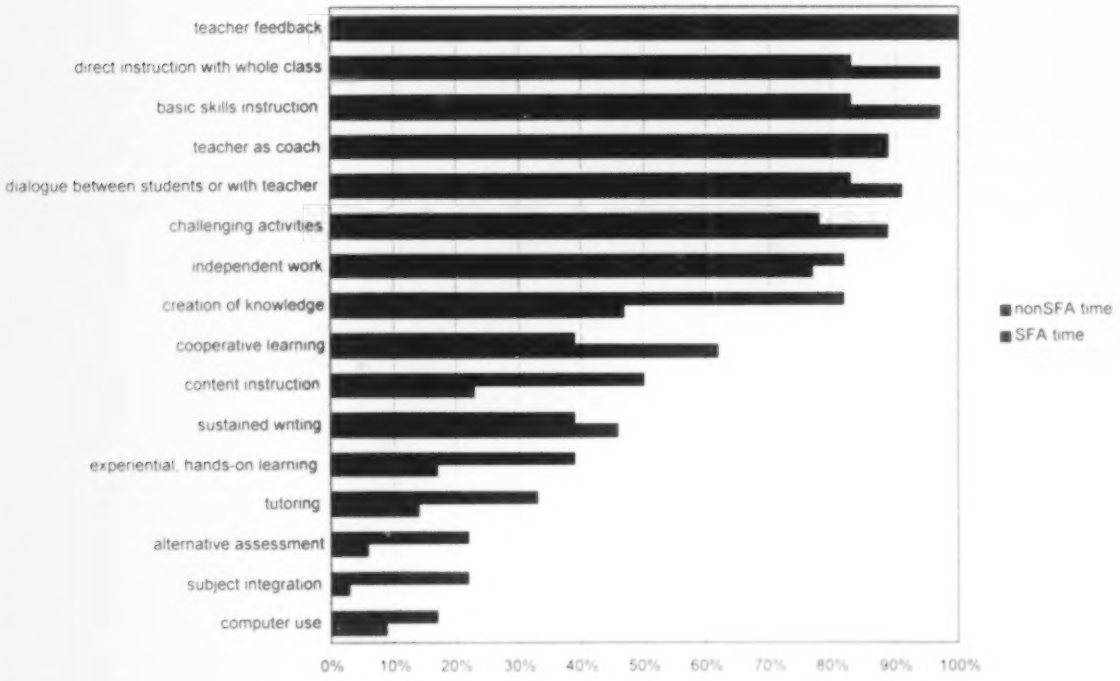
First, we compared instructional strategies across the three schools and found no significant differences, with two exceptions. Peterson scored higher than the other two schools on the variables of *experiential, hands-on learning,* and *teacher-as-coach.* Our interviews with teachers there suggest an interest in these approaches. Bayside scored higher than the other schools on the variables of *cooperative learning* and *dialogue* between students or between students and teacher, perhaps because of the heavy skew of SFA versus non-SFA observations conducted at this school. We believe that the variables of cooperative learning and dialogue may be correlated, thus their co-occurrence is not unexpected. It should be noted that evidence of all of these instructional strategies was seen only some of the time in observed classrooms, not extensively throughout the observation period.

We compared the instructional strategies in SFA and non-SFA academic classrooms, pooling interval data from all three schools and in both languages. Figure 2 shows that SFA instructional time was characterized by slightly more evidence of direct instruction, basic skills instruction, dialogue, challenging activities, and considerably more evidence of cooperative learning than non-SFA academic time. These strategies, particularly the inclusion of direct instruction and cooperative learning, are consistent with the SFA curriculum. One might expect to see evidence of cooperative learning in even more SFA classrooms. However, it should be noted that many of our COMs were

[4] That is, classes in which the majority of observation intervals were recorded as language arts, writing, math, science, or social studies, as opposed to art, music, or no subject. Non-SFA academic classes made up 78% of the non-SFA classes we observed across all schools.

completed within the first 45 minutes of the 90-minute reading period. During the first half of the reading period, there is more emphasis on whole-group instruction. It may also appear counterintuitive that SFA classrooms were characterized by less tutoring than non-SFA academic classrooms, particularly as this is an expressed part of the program. However, bear in mind that SFA tutoring takes place outside of the 90-minute reading period so that students do not miss classroom instruction, but instead receive one-to-one tutoring later in the day.

Figure 2: Instructional Strategies in SFA vs. Non-SFA Academic Class Time



We found more student creation of knowledge, content instruction, and experiential learning in non-SFA academic classrooms as compared to SFA classrooms. These strategies are commonly accepted as good teaching practice, and we were pleased to find evidence of them in math, science, and social studies. Both SFA and non-SFA academic classrooms included extensive teacher feedback and instances of the teacher acting as coach. Taken together, this evidence suggests that all the classrooms we observed — both SFA and non-SFA — involved a mix of instructional strategies that are known to be effective. However, we saw very little evidence of subject integration in non-SFA academic classrooms and, by definition, even less in the SFA reading period observations. Computer use was not prevalent in either SFA or non-SFA academic classrooms. SFA does not include computer use as part of the program, and the fact that many of our non-SFA academic observations were conducted in the primary grades may account for the low evidence of computer use we observed. Alternative assessment practices were evident only in a few SFA and non-SFA academic classrooms. We found no major differences in the instructional strategies used in SFA classes taught in Spanish and English.

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Assessment of the Degree of Effective Instructional Practices

In addition to assessing COM data on instructional strategies and student engagement at our case study schools, we also analyzed our qualitative notes to determine whether the classrooms we observed were characterized by effective instructional practices. Here, we used a series of directed questions guided by theory and research on what constitutes effective classroom practice for culturally and linguistically diverse students. We answered these questions for all classrooms we observed. The purpose was twofold: to see whether Success for All contributed to these effective practices, and whether teachers incorporated other effective strategies of their own.

The theory and research which guide these questions are drawn primarily from the principles for effective teaching and learning that guide the work of the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (Tharp, 1998), the research by Cummins (1989) on effective programs for culturally and linguistically diverse students, and Newmann and Wehlage's (1995) research on authentic pedagogy. Tharp's (1998) principles for the effective education of at-risk students focus on pedagogical strategies rooted in sociocultural theory. Tharp characterizes effective classroom instruction as (1) facilitating learning through joint productive activity between teachers and students; (2) developing competence in the language and literacy of instruction throughout all instructional activities; (3) contextualizing teaching and curriculum in the experiences and skills of home and community; (4) challenging students toward cognitive complexity; and (5) engaging students through dialogue. Newmann and Wehlage's (1995) definition of authentic pedagogy overlaps considerably with Tharp's principles. They emphasize the importance of involving students in higher order thinking and substantive conversational exchange, producing complex understandings, and helping students connect substantive knowledge with public problems or personal experiences.

Consistent with these findings, Cummins (1989) concluded that effective programs for linguistically and culturally diverse students have the following process characteristics: (1) allow for the development of students' native linguistic talents; (2) foster a sense of personal and cultural identity; (3) promote multiculturalism rather than assimilation; (4) employ materials relevant for minority students; (5) engage students in cooperative learning; (6) maintain high expectations for minority and white students; and (7) promote confidence in ability to learn. Cummins is attentive to the need for students of color to have their histories and experiences confirmed by schools. Because we believe this to be a goal of schooling, we were attentive to these issues in our research. The tenets that Cummins outlines are not just effective practices for students of color, but for all students.

Based on this research, a set of questions was developed to explore effective practice. For this report, we analyzed the answers to the following five questions:

1. Did the curriculum and pedagogy used by the teacher encourage students to dialogue or use language?
2. In the course of the lesson, do students make connections between substantive knowledge and either public problems or personal experiences?
3. Did the curriculum and pedagogy foster a sense of personal and cultural identity?

4. Was there evidence that teachers had high expectations of the students?
5. Were the students engaged in meaningful and challenging learning activities?

We answered these questions for the 60 classrooms[5] we observed: 25 at Peterson, 24 at Gardena, and 11 at Bayside. Thirty-two (32) of these classroom observations were during SFA time. All of the answers to each question were grouped together to aid analysis. We used a "yes/somewhat/no" format in determining whether a particular element (e.g., high expectations) was present in the classroom. "Yes" and "no" answers were usually straightforward and were counted as such. The following answers coded as "yes" and "no" serve as examples:

Was there evidence that the teacher had high expectations of the students? Describe how you know this. Were these expectations conveyed equally to all students?

YES:

First grade (Language Arts)

Teacher really encourages students to write and take their writing seriously. She encourages them to think creatively and improve quality of their journal entries.

Fourth grade (Math)

Yes, class has serious academic focus. Seems like middle school level almost.

NO:

First grade (English Language Development)

Not really. She wanted them to use English and she praised them when they did, but she allowed them to use Spanish if they really had to communicate something rather than at least first trying in English.

Fourth grade (Social Studies)

No real evidence of this. It seemed more like going through the motions.

The "somewhat" answer reflected hedges and qualifiers by the observer (e.g., "hard to tell" accompanied by a description), or other situations that were neither yes nor no. The following answers coded as "somewhat" serve as examples:

Were the students engaged in meaningful and challenging learning activities? Describe how you know this.

SFA Wings

I think the idea of teaching prediction is important, challenging and meaningful. But I think the teacher went through it too quickly and I doubt that everyone got it.

---

[5] We observed a total of 60 classrooms but only completed COMs in 58 of them due to time constraints.

Kindergarten

Given that it's kindergarten, the activities of singing, letter practice, group story reading, basic reading comprehension, seemed meaningful and challenging. Hard to tell, really. However, centers seemed somewhat unchallenging. One involved playing with dinosaurs; another was blocks. Only two centers involved academic work. Seemed like more structured activities for centers could have been better.

The three possible answers were tallied by category. If for a given category (i.e., Spanish SFA classes), there were an equal number of "yes" and "no" answers to a given question, that was also considered "somewhat" in our overall assessment of that variable. We tallied these responses across several categories: by school, by language of instruction, and by SFA/non-SFA academic time.

No school excelled in providing all of the elements we sought. All schools appeared to be providing a curriculum and pedagogy that encouraged student dialogue, but none of them were strong in fostering personal and cultural identity among their students. This latter element was in fact visible in each school in the Spanish-language classrooms (present prior to Proposition 227). However, the fostering of students' personal and cultural identity was seldom observed in the English-language classrooms, where in fact students of diverse ethnicities were present. Also notable were the findings that Peterson stood out for holding high expectations for its students, Bayside scored the highest in getting students to make connections between substantive knowledge and personal experience, and Gardena was highest among the three schools in providing its students meaningful and challenging activities. See Table 2 for more details.

Comparing the SFA and non-SFA academic classes yielded some interesting results. See Figures 3 and 4 for a comparison. Similar, moderate levels of high expectations characterized SFA and non-SFA academic classes for students, with the SFA classes being only slightly higher. The SFA classrooms were characterized by (1) more frequent dialogue and use of language; (2) greater connections to the world beyond school; and (3) more meaningful and challenging activities than the non-SFA academic classrooms. Neither SFA nor non-SFA academic classes showed much evidence of promoting students' personal and cultural identity, however, which is particularly concerning in light of the diversity of student populations these schools serve.

In interpreting these results, we must recall that just as our questions come from research-based, broadly accepted principles of exemplary curriculum and pedagogy for culturally diverse students, so, too does Success for All. The program was designed to incorporate the best practices of reading pedagogy; therefore, it should not surprise us that it fares well in analyses of exemplary elements of classroom practice. At the same time, the differences between SFA and non-SFA classes suggest that teachers are not transferring the pedagogical strategies used in SFA to their other subjects.

Table 2

Effective Instructional Strategies by School and Class Type

	Dialogue/Language			Connections			identity			High Expectations			Meaningful/Chal		
	%			%			%			%			%		
	Yes	No	Some	Yes	No	Some	Yes	No	Some	Yes	No	Some	Yes	No	Some
Peterson (N=25)	52	36	12	40	48	12	40	60	0	56	20	24	36	32	32
Bayside (N=11)	73	18	9	64	36	0	0	82	18	27	73	0	18	27	55
Gardena (N=24)	75	21	4	29	67	4	13	58	29	35	65	0	58	38	4
SFA (N=32)	78	9	13	63	34	3	19	63	19	50	50	0	56	19	25
Non-SFA Academic	53	42	5	21	68	11	27	68	5	41	47	12	37	53	11
English (N=43)	67	23	9	42	51	7	23	72	5	46	42	12	35	44	21
Spanish (N=17)	59	35	6	35	59	6	18	41	41	31	13	56	59	24	17

Figure 3: Effective Practices Observed in SFA Classrooms

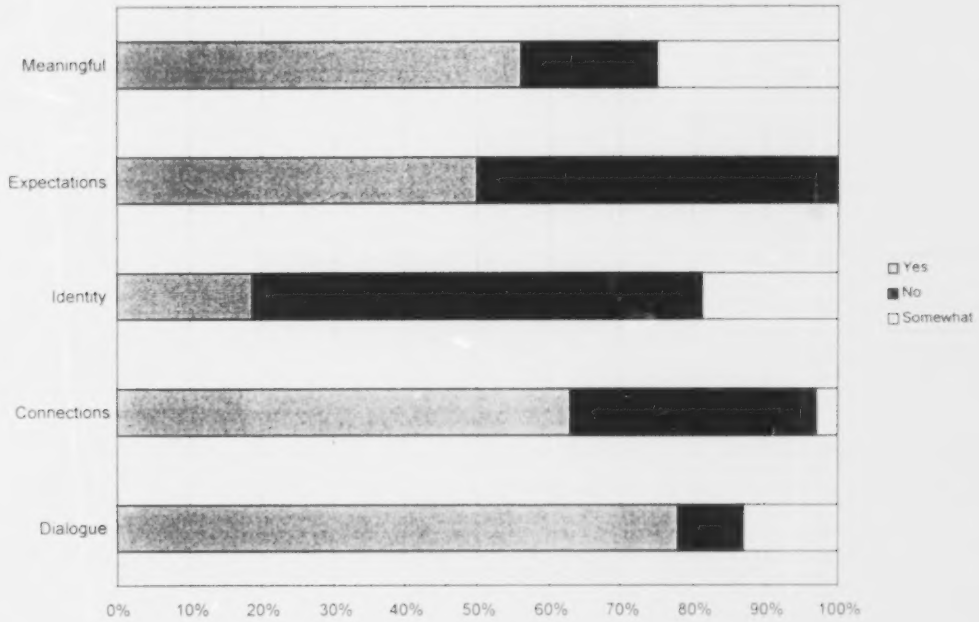
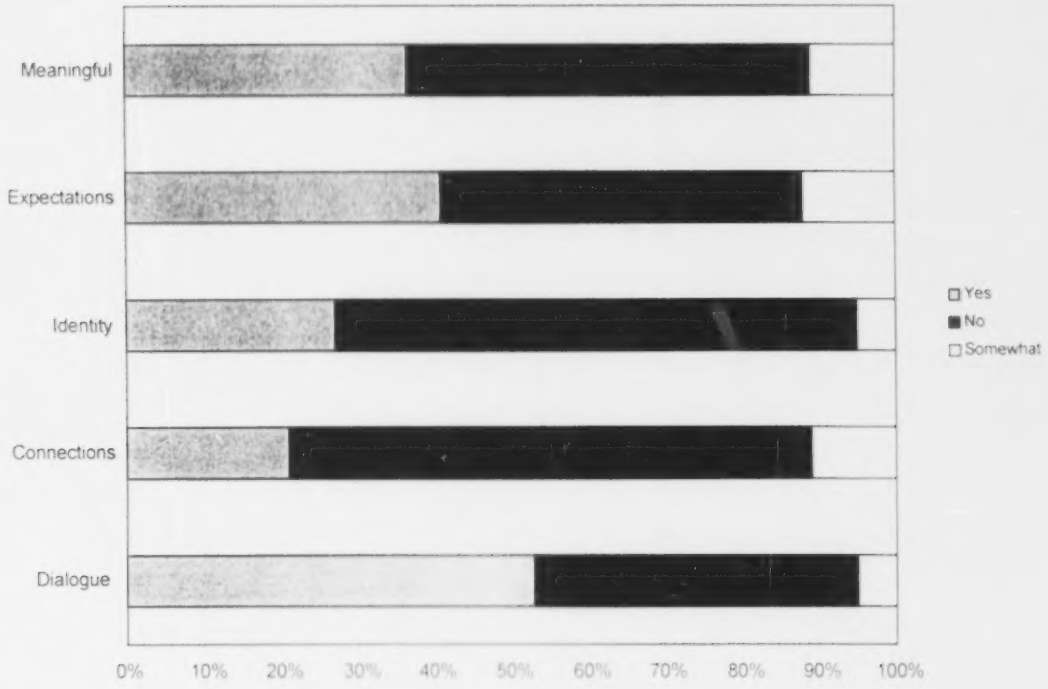


Figure 4: Effective Practices Observed in Non-SFA Academic Classrooms



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Effect of SFA on Teachers' Professional Lives

Despite the positive results for classroom instruction and student engagement that were related to SFA, when we assessed the effect of SFA on teachers' professional lives, we came up with some mixed and somewhat ironic conclusions. Teachers believed SFA was beneficial for students, and they believed SFA enhanced their skills at teaching reading. At the same time, many complained that the program constrained their autonomy and creativity and thus did not enhance their professional lives. These findings are consistent with those from surveys conducted with teachers in other SFA schools (see Rakow & Ross, 1997). Only some very strong supporters did not have such complaints. Also, there were a few new teachers, particularly those at Bayside, who believed SFA made teaching easier and more enjoyable.

The most common complaint from teachers was the repetition and the tight time constraints of SFA. Success for All made teaching more demanding because, as one teacher stated, "It's just a lot of things to do in so little amount of time." Other teachers complained that the routines, particularly in the Roots program, became monotonous. One teacher who generally liked the program and thought the structure was good for the students found it "boring" to teach.

Regarding the lack of creativity and professional judgment involved in teaching SFA, one teacher remarked: "I'm j. a kind of pigeon-holed into what SFA thinks are good teaching skills for reading." Another teacher wished that SFA were less teacher-driven, especially for the younger grades, to allow for more active participation by students. Echoing the statements by many others, a teacher stated: "It would be nice if there was a little more room for creativity and a little more breathing room." A few teachers complained that the "script" (i.e., the teachers' manual) was demeaning to them. "It makes seem like the teacher has no brains," remarked one teacher.

On the other hand, a survey conducted by the administration at Peterson in 1998 revealed that 14 of 16 regular classroom teachers claimed that their skills at teaching reading had improved as a result of SFA. Our interviews at both Gardena and Peterson generally confirmed this finding. As one experienced teacher stated: "You don't know how long I've been teaching and it's the first time that anyone's... [made] teaching almost as a science rather than, 'Well, I think I'll do this today, or that today....'" A new teacher remarked: "When we adopted Success for All, I was presented with a really regimented program, and it was like, 'Great, at least I feel like I'm teaching reading.'" At Gardena, a teacher explained that she very much appreciated SFA for separating her homeroom into reading groups, because she knew she could not have met the needs of all of these students that ranged in reading ability level from third grade in English and third grade in Spanish to fifth/sixth in English and fifth/sixth in Spanish.

At Bayside, the effects on teachers' professional lives varied depending on whom one asked. Most newer teachers felt that SFA made teaching much easier. One teacher stated, "I think it's good because all your students are on the same level," adding, "I think it helped me a lot this year, as a first-year teacher." Another new teacher remarked: "I really enjoy it." One second-year teacher stated that the structure of SFA made her feel much more confident in teaching reading than she felt at other times of the day. To a member of our research team, she said: "Having you here [during SFA] did not faze

me at all. Now if you had come in one of my other classes, I would have been a little more nervous." Some teachers with several years experience were also quite positive. One teacher stated: "I feel more competent because...we can see it everyday that they are progressing." On the other hand, a number of veteran teachers at Bayside complained. One stated: "I don't enjoying teaching anymore... I feel I am limited." Another agreed: "My particular talents are wasted. Anybody off the street could do this."

Ironically, teachers' comments about their lack of autonomy and creativity in implementing SFA were often accompanied by strong statements that the program was working well for students. For example, one teacher stated:

> I think it really takes away from the teacher being able to do what the teacher feels...not necessarily is best, but what they're good at, and I think that's probably the hardest part for a lot of teachers. It is ninety minutes where maybe they're not really good at this type of teaching. But we do it, and the kids are fine, and they're learning, and that's what is important.

Similarly, when asked what advice she would give to teachers in another school considering the adoption of SFA, one Roots teacher said: "I would tell them it's working with the kids, it's a bitch to teach. That's it." She concluded: "Bottom line, it is not fun [to teach] but the kids are totally learning. So who's it supposed to be pleasant for, me or them?" Comments about the lack of enjoyment of teaching SFA were more common among Roots teachers, as the Roots component of the program is more structured than Wings. Teachers felt more "on stage" during SFA and some found this tiring. As one teacher remarked, "you're putting on this huge like drama performance to keep [the students] engaged," and she said this exhausted her for the rest of the day (see Datnow & Castellano, in press).

Some teachers also mentioned that while SFA did provide a script and most student and teacher materials, some time-consuming preparation work was also required. For example, teachers needed to develop vocabulary cards for the word wall, meaningful sentences to accompany stories, and they needed to complete student score sheets. One teacher at Bayside remarked: "We were told that everything was going to be done for us." This was disappointing for some teachers.

We did not find substantial evidence that meaningful teacher collaboration or communication increased as a result of SFA. While some teachers felt more comfortable with each other now that they were all using the same program, others saw no change. A few teachers felt that their resistance to SFA had bound them together. As explained earlier, the component level meetings did not work very effectively. We did not hear many reports of teachers talking to each other about the students they shared in common through SFA.

In sum, while teachers may have had trouble letting go of the freedom to create their own lessons that they had long enjoyed, most were willing to bear these costs. As one teacher stated, "Not everybody was sold on it, but we saw the assessment happening, and saw the improvements right away... the improvement my first graders made from January probably till March was huge compared to what they had done from September to January." Of course, there were those who refused to allow

the program to constrain them and thus adhered loosely to it. Nevertheless, with the exception of a few particularly vocal resisters of the program, almost all teachers felt that SFA was working well in teaching students to read and thus were seemingly willing to compromise professional freedom for 90 minutes per day, but not more. It is also uncertain how long teachers will continue to teach a curriculum that they find professionally constraining.

Summary: Effects of SFA on Teaching and Learning

The implementation of SFA positively affected classroom instruction in all three schools, at least in terms of reading. Comparing SFA and non-SFA class time, we found that student attention/academic engaged time during our SFA observations was higher and was characterized as being stronger in most elements of effective classroom practice than non-SFA time. At the same time, whole-group direct instruction was common, and we saw little fostering of students' personal and cultural identities in either SFA or non-SFA classes.

Almost every teacher felt that SFA was working well in teaching students to read. Some teachers also believed that SFA had enhanced their teaching abilities and made their professional lives more rewarding. However, a more common opinion among teachers was that teaching SFA was quite demanding and that it constrained their autonomy and creativity, thereby negatively contributing to their professional lives.

Conclusions and Implications

This final report of a two-year qualitative study of three Success for All schools addressed what happens when a school implements SFA and the effects of SFA implementation on teaching and learning. The three schools were able to build capacity effectively, and sufficient support for continuing SFA was evident among representatives of all stakeholder groups. Teacher's opinions of SFA ranged most widely, with some supportive and others not. There were hurdles, to be sure, but the schools persisted with implementation. However, the leadership at each school worried about the time when they would no longer have the fiscal or teacher support that was enabling them to continue with SFA. Other ongoing challenges included maintaining fidelity to the program curriculum, using component level meetings effectively, and maintaining a beneficial relationship with SFA trainers.

Teachers at the schools in our study implemented most of the SFA curriculum. Still, many teachers made adaptations to the program, often due to time constraints and their professional judgments about what students needed. While some teachers complained about the constraints on their freedom that resulted from SFA, others welcomed the change and, importantly, many teachers reported greater student engagement in reading. Some teachers disliked SFA and even left schools as a result. However, some of these teachers persisted at their school sites, worrying principals and facilitators alike.

This study was not designed to monitor student achievement, but school reports showed that results of SFA reading assessments were positive. Our study confirmed teacher reports of increased student engagement in reading. As a whole, our set of classroom observations suggests that student attention and time spent on academic tasks during SFA class time was high, and higher during SFA than during non-SFA academic class time. In addition, SFA class time was characterized as being strong in most elements of effective classroom practice, stronger than non-SFA class time in most areas. This more effective use of time may have contributed to the improvement in reading that many teachers reported. Still, we observed extensive whole-group direct instruction and little attention in the curriculum to fostering students' personal and cultural identities in both SFA and non-SFA classes.

In short, it seems that several positive outcomes resulted when these three schools implemented SFA: students' engagement in reading increased; classroom instruction during reading was effective; and teachers acquired new skills for teaching reading. All of these positive changes were specifically related to reading. We did not, however, find substantial evidence for other types of whole-school changes (e.g., improved teacher collaboration, interest in reform in other subject areas, changes in governance structures, or relations between staff and administration) occurring as a result of SFA implementation in these three schools. Indeed, these are not the major goals of the SFA reform model. However, this does suggest some limitations of SFA in terms of what the program, by itself, could be expected to achieve.

This study raises some important questions to address in further qualitative studies of Success for All, as well as studies of other externally-developed school reform models. First, are there schools in which SFA implementation, in the absence of other reforms, has led to whole-school change? Do schools that are implementing the Roots & Wings math, science, and social studies curricula achieve such results? Second, how can schools better achieve ownership for an externally-developed reform among teachers? If some level of adaptation is inevitable and perhaps necessary to engage teacher support and program sustainability, how much adaptation is too much? Third, how does classroom instruction differ in comparable schools implementing and not implementing externally-developed reform models, or across models? Our findings on the differences between SFA and non-SFA class time within SFA schools suggests that it may be useful to conduct further comparisons of the quality of instruction and student engagement in SFA and non-SFA schools, perhaps comparing reading and math. These questions are critical for the institutionalization of SFA and other externally-developed reform models and thus merit further study.

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Appendix

Overview of Activities during the Ninety-Minute SFA Reading Period

In Roots, the daily 90-minute reading class involves a routine of 20 minutes of Story Telling and Retelling (STaR) or Extended STaR, 50 minutes of the Reading Roots Shared Story lesson, and 20 minutes for the Peabody Language Development Kit. During the StaR portion, the teacher reads a book (a selection of quality children's literature) to students and engages them in listening comprehension and prediction activities. The Reading Roots Shared Story lesson, which involves students reading stories (SFA-produced small books that they can take home) with phonetically regular vocabulary, emphasizes a rapid pace of instruction including shared practice, letter activities, partner reading, story activities such as "stretch-spell-say," and a reading celebration in which two to three students read a story to their classmates. Peabody Language Kits are a structured, carefully sequenced set of oral language activities that engage students with a variety of media (e.g., puppets, songs, posters, and objects). The Roots manual contains detailed directions for students and teachers, including lesson plans. All student materials are provided by SFA. Each Reading Roots lesson should take two or three days.

In Wings, the 90-minute reading period involves 20 minutes of listening comprehension, a 55-minute segment of reading instruction called "Reading Together," and a Book Club or skills instruction segment of 15 minutes. During the listening comprehension segment, the teacher shares quality literature (e.g., stories, short books, novels, non-fiction) with the students, engaging them in discussion about the story and the author's craft. In "Reading Together," the teacher meets with the whole group of students for a directed lesson and students then work in teams on follow-up activities. Teams of four to five members are assigned, and within each team, students are assigned partners. Basal readers, novels, or anthologies are used, depending on students' reading level, and are accompanied by SFA-developed activities and worksheets. Depending on the day (there is a five-day cycle), teachers will teach new vocabulary, involve students in making predictions about the story, teach students how to write meaningful sentences using new words, or conduct guided practice or review or reading comprehension exercises. Depending on the day, students then read portions of the story silently and then aloud with their partners, and then engage in discussion of reading comprehension questions with their partners ("Treasure Hunts"), write individual answers, and craft meaningful sentences using vocabulary words. On another day, students will engage in discussions with their partners and individually do writing activities related to the story ("Adventures in Writing"). Other important components of "Reading Together" include individual practice of targeted skills ("Team Mastery"), individual tests on reading comprehension ("Story Test"), and team points that students are given for completing various activities. At the end of each "Reading Together" segment, the teacher writes a sentence on the board and asks teams of students to identify and correct errors. This is known as the "Two Minute Edit."

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